



Tracking Investment and Engagement: A Regional Portrait

July, 2011



The Community Foundation
FOR GREATER ATLANTA

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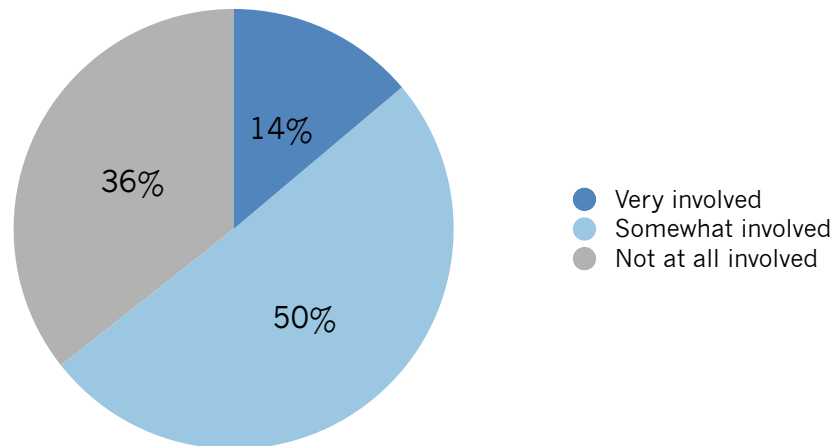
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Community Involvement

The first several questions asked respondents about their community, how involved they are in it, and how to improve it. Figure 1 shows that nearly two-thirds of metro Atlantans (64%) feel at least somewhat involved in their community. Looking at the entire picture, though, more than twice as many people say that they are not involved at all (36%) than say that they are very involved (14%).

Figure 1: Thinking about your neighborhood or the broader community, how involved would you say you are?



To learn more about metro Atlantans' involvement, we looked at a couple of different aspects of informal and formal ties to their communities. Informal ties are the common interactions that create bonds between community members, and result in the networks necessary to improve communities. Two such ties are simply knowing the names of neighbors and talking with them about local issues at neighborhood locations such as parks, grocery stores, and restaurants. Figures 2 and 3 show that two-thirds (66%) know the names of most of their neighbors, and half (52%) discuss important local issues with them.

Individuals with higher levels of education are more likely to have both types of informal ties.

Figure 2: Would you say that you know the names of most or all of your immediate neighbors?

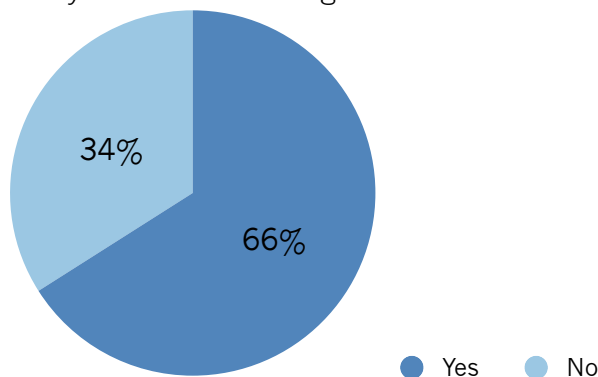
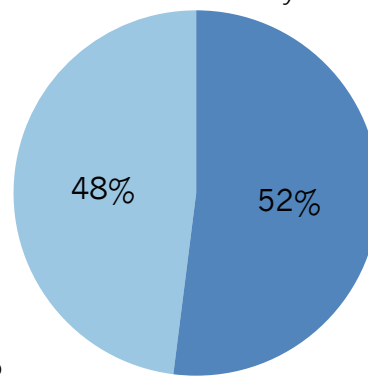


Figure 3: Do you ever talk about local issues with your neighbors or other community members?



Formal ties, on the other hand, are those official relationships someone has with their community—participating in the neighborhood patrol, serving as secretary of the civic club, etc. In metro Atlanta, the level of formal ties is even lower than the level of informal ties, largely due to a lack of opportunity. Figures 4 and 5 show that only one in three residents (36%) is a member of a neighborhood organization, and only one in five (21%) participates in an online community for their neighborhood. Not all communities, though, have neighborhood associations or listservs. When either of those two opportunities exist in a community, three-quarters of residents indicate that they participate in them.

Individuals with higher levels of income and education are much more likely to be involved in these activities, but they are also the ones with the greatest level of access to neighborhood associations and listservs. For example, 56% of those earning \$90,000 or more are a member of a neighborhood association, compared to only 13% of those making \$30,000 or less, but a full 70% of the low income group say that no such group exists in their neighborhood.

Figure 4: Is there a neighborhood association, civic club, or homeowners group for your neighborhood? [If YES: Are you a member of the association/club?]

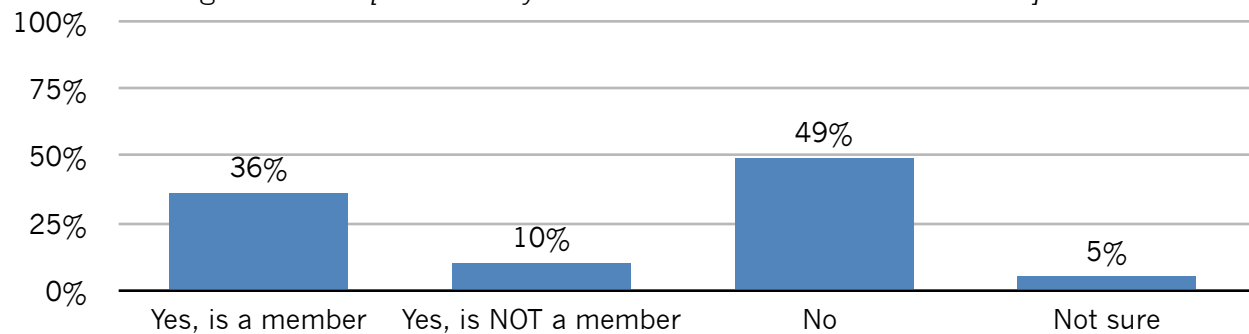
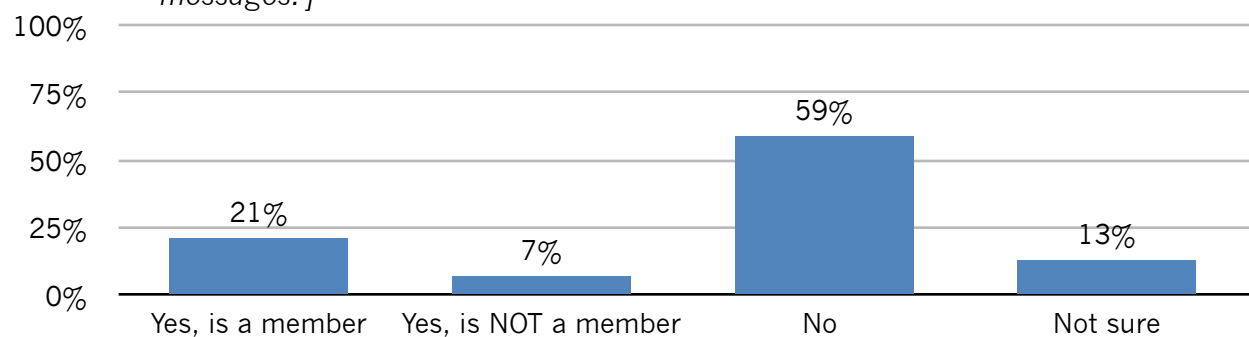


Figure 5: Is there a website, listserv, or online message board for your neighborhood or local community? [If YES: Do you participate by visiting the website or reading messages?]



We next asked residents about other groups they might participate in outside of their immediate community. A majority of metro Atlantans (59%) does not participate in any organizations or groups intended to address a specific issue or improve their community (Figure 6). Among those who are members of some such organization, 44% indicate they are involved with a business, civic, or professional group, followed close behind by online communities (36%), parent involvement organizations (34%), and issue-specific service organizations (30%) (Figure 7).

Figure 6: In your spare time, do you participate in any groups or organizations that are not work-related and are intended address a specific issue, meet a specific need, or help your community or the metro Atlanta area?

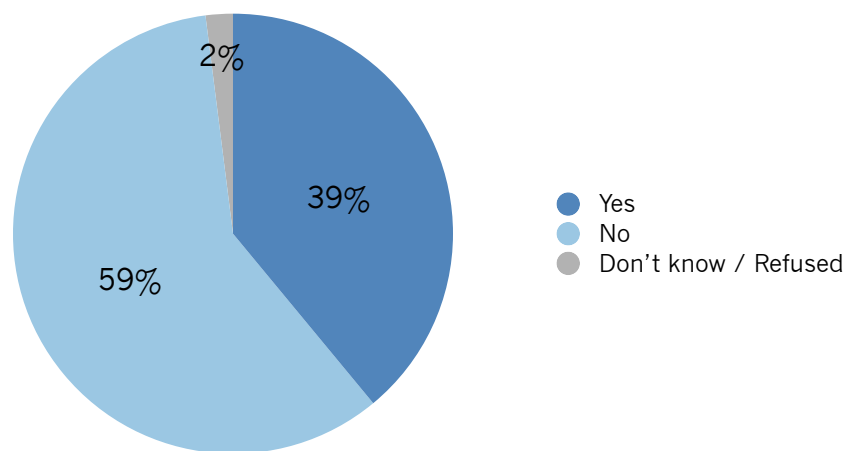
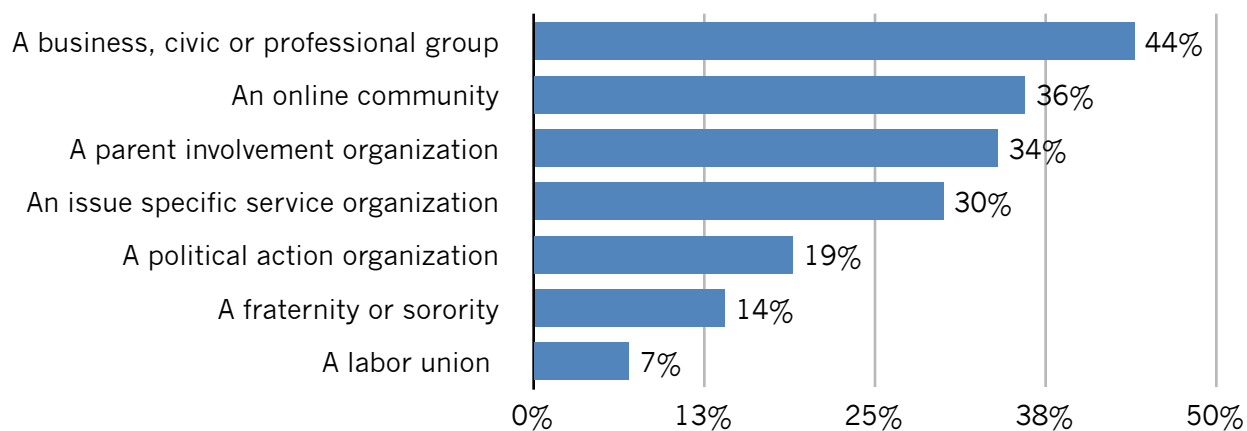


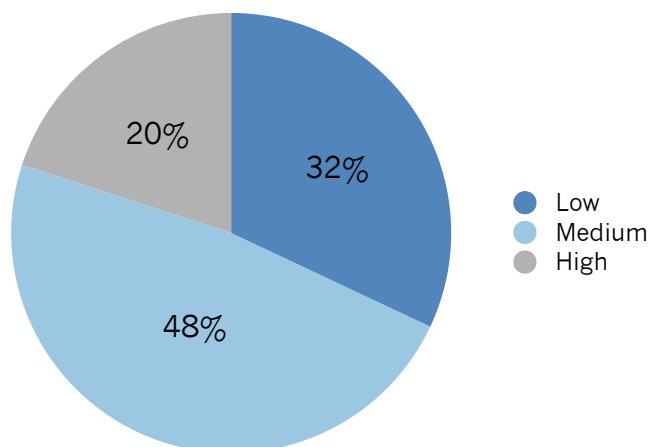
Figure 7: If participate in an organization: Please tell me whether or not you currently participate in the following organizations. By participate, I mean attend meetings or volunteer time to help the club or organization. (% Yes)



Using a few of the above questions, along with a few to be asked later, we developed an engagement index, which can be used to categorize respondents into high, medium, and low levels of community engagement. This index simply sums together their responses to the informal ties questions, the formal ties questions, as well as questions relating to donating, volunteering, and political participation. Figure 8 shows the distribution of the index, and it will be clear throughout the rest of the report how important overall engagement turns out to be.

Looking at the demographic subgroups, the most highly engaged are those with higher levels of education, those with higher income levels, middle-aged people, and married people.

Figure 8: Level of Civic Engagement



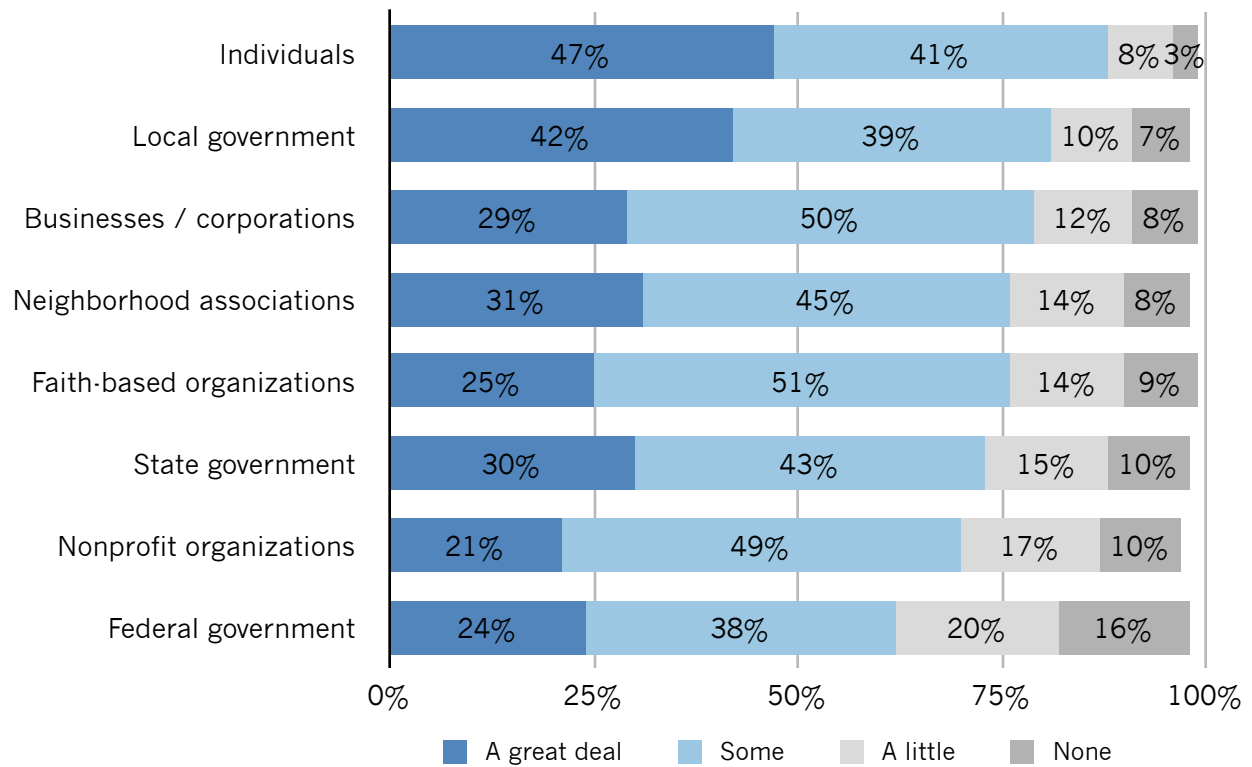
We next asked metro Atlantans who should be responsible for improving their community (Figure 9). Residents feel the responsibility lies first with themselves and other individuals to make the needed improvements (47% a great deal of responsibility, 41% some responsibility). The other group bearing this responsibility in the eyes of residents is the local government (42% a great deal of responsibility, 39% some responsibility). All other tested entities are seen as having at least some responsibility by a majority of respondents, but individuals and local government are the two most important.

Businesses/corporations are seen as the next most responsible (29% a great deal of responsibility, 50% some responsibility), placing them above both neighborhood associations (31% a great deal of responsibility, 45% some responsibility) and nonprofit organizations (21% a great deal of responsibility, 49% some responsibility). Nonprofit organizations, in fact, are the least likely to be seen as having a great deal of responsibility in improving communities.

This is the first place where the different levels of the engagement index matter. The more highly engaged a resident is, the more likely he or she is to believe that each of the entities below should have a great deal of responsibility in improving the community, with the exception of state and federal government. So, not only are these people the most involved, but they believe everyone else should be involved, too.

There are also some geographical differences. We divided the 23-county area into three regions—urban, suburban, and exurban—to see if residents living in Atlanta proper might feel differently about these issues than those who live in the counties farthest away (see map in Appendix I). Residents of the exurban counties are less likely to believe neighborhood associations should be responsible, but they are also the least likely to have neighborhood associations or neighborhood message boards. These are the only areas where geography appears to matter.

Figure 9: When you think about improving your community, how much responsibility should each of the following have in improving it?



Philanthropic Giving

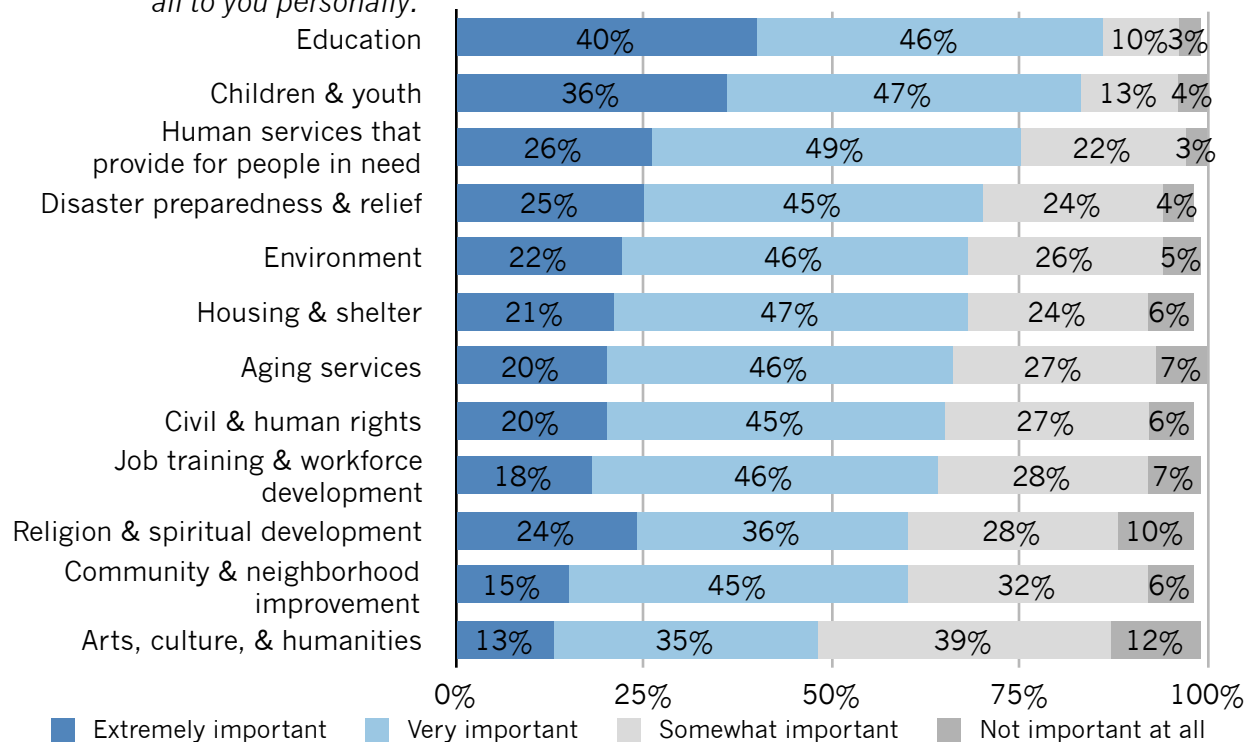
The next section asked metro Atlantans about the issues that are most important to them and specifically about the ones they are most likely to support financially.

Education and issues affecting children are by far the most important to metro Atlanta residents, with over 80% believing both to be at least very important, and about 40% believing both to be extremely important (Figure 10). The next most important issues are those that address the immediate needs of individuals; both human services and disaster relief are seen as at least very important by about three-quarters of residents.

Also of note are the three issues that are seen as the least important. First, religion and spiritual development are seen as at least very important by 60% of residents, and 24% of residents see it as *extremely* important. This will be a theme throughout the report—religion may not always be the most important issue, but when it is, it is very important. Second, despite the prior conversation about community-level issues, community and neighborhood improvement was only seen as extremely important by 15% of residents. And finally, arts and culture is the only issue considered to be very important by less than half of residents.

African Americans are more likely to consider nearly all of the issues to be extremely important.

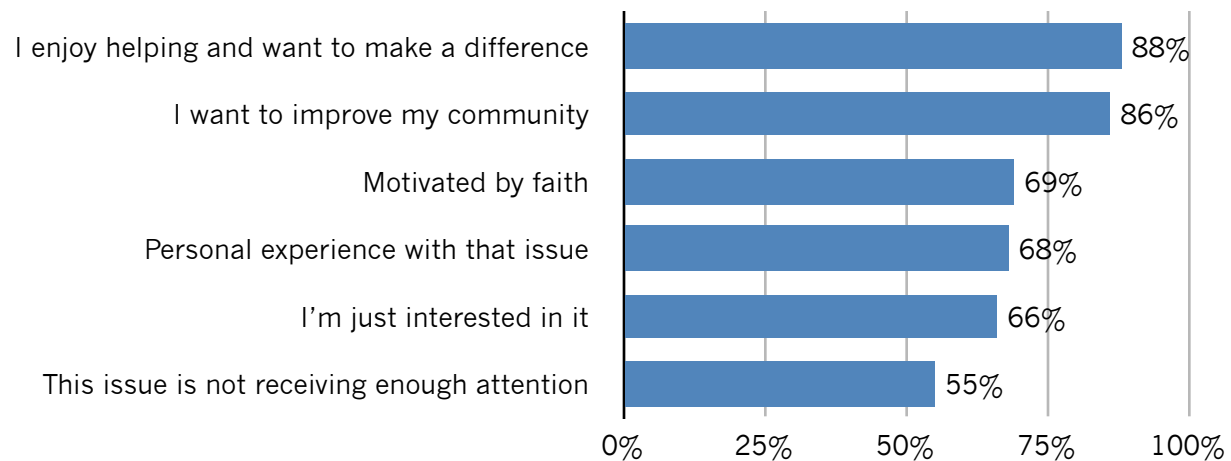
Figure 10: I'm going to list several issues that people often support through donations of money, time, or expertise. For each of the following issues, I'd like you to tell me if it is extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not important at all to you personally.



Next, thinking about all the issues above that are important to residents, we asked them why they are important (Figure 11). As it happens, each of the tested reasons are possible explanations for a majority of metro Atlantans. The two that stand out, with over 85% support, are the intrinsic motivations of simply wanting to make a difference and wanting to improve their community.

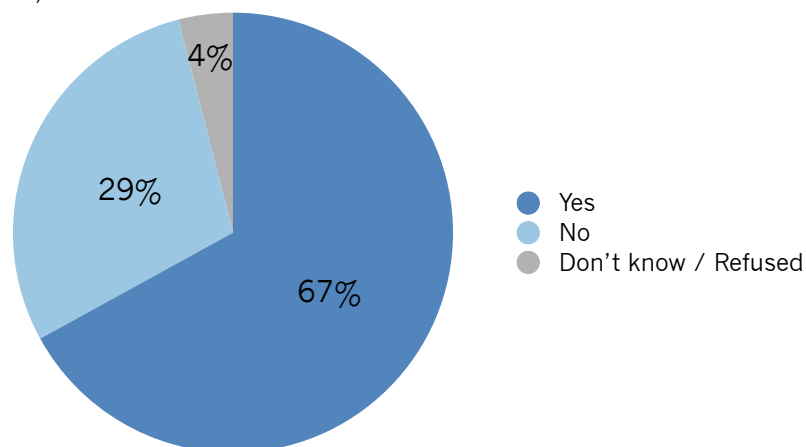
Looking at the engagement index, individuals who are not very engaged are considerably less likely to say any of the tested reasons describe why the issues are important to them.

Figure 11: Thinking about the issues that are important to you, which of the following reasons describe why they are important to you? (% Yes)



Considering all the issues people find important, we next asked them if they took the next step by donating money to support them (Figure 12). It turns out that two-thirds (67%) of residents did in fact donate some amount of money to support the causes that are important to them. This is down from 2001, when 80% of residents reported donating.¹

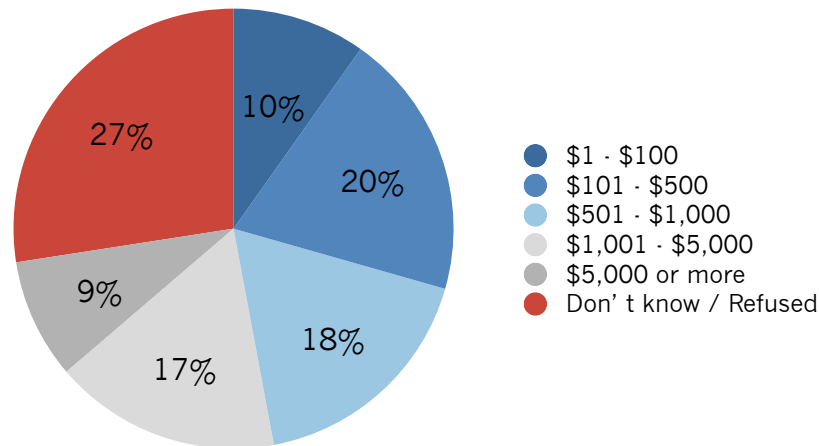
Figure 12: Did you donate any money to support any of the issues we just talked about, or to any others, in 2010?



¹ 2001 data are taken from the report *The Power of One: 2001 Report on Personal Charitable Giving in Greater Atlanta* by David M. Van Slyke and Arthur C. Brooks of Research Atlanta.

Of donating metro Atlantans, about one-third (30%) gave under \$500 in 2010, while about one in four (26%) gave over \$1,000 (Figure 13).

Figure 13: About how much money, including cash value of any property, did you and members of your household donate to support those or any other issues or organizations in 2010?



Residents who donated are more likely to be engaged in their community. They are about 50% more likely to know the names of their neighbors than those who do not donate, and they are nearly twice as likely to talk about local issues at neighborhood locations, to participate in a neighborhood association, or participate in an online message board for their local community.

Among those who did donate money, human services are the most popular destination for donations, with 64% of donors giving some money in support (Figure 14). Religion and spiritual development now claims the second spot, with 60% giving some money. Recall that in Figure 10, religious issues were of fairly low importance to metro Atlantans, but it appears that the people who say religion is important are willing to put their money where their mouth is, so to speak. Children's issues are still near the top, but drop a couple of places. In 2001, an identical 60% donated to support religious issues.

Looking at a portion of the same graph, but now examining how large donors (\$5,000+) give, we see that they are more likely to support a greater number of issues or organizations (Figure 15). The data indicate that they are able to support several issues, while those with lower income only support one or two. In particular, high income individuals are much more likely to support children and youth, religion and spiritual development, and disaster preparedness and relief. Additionally, those with higher levels of income are, as one might expect, more likely to donate in general.

Figure 14: If donated : Did you donate money to any of the following issues or organizations in 2010? (% Yes)

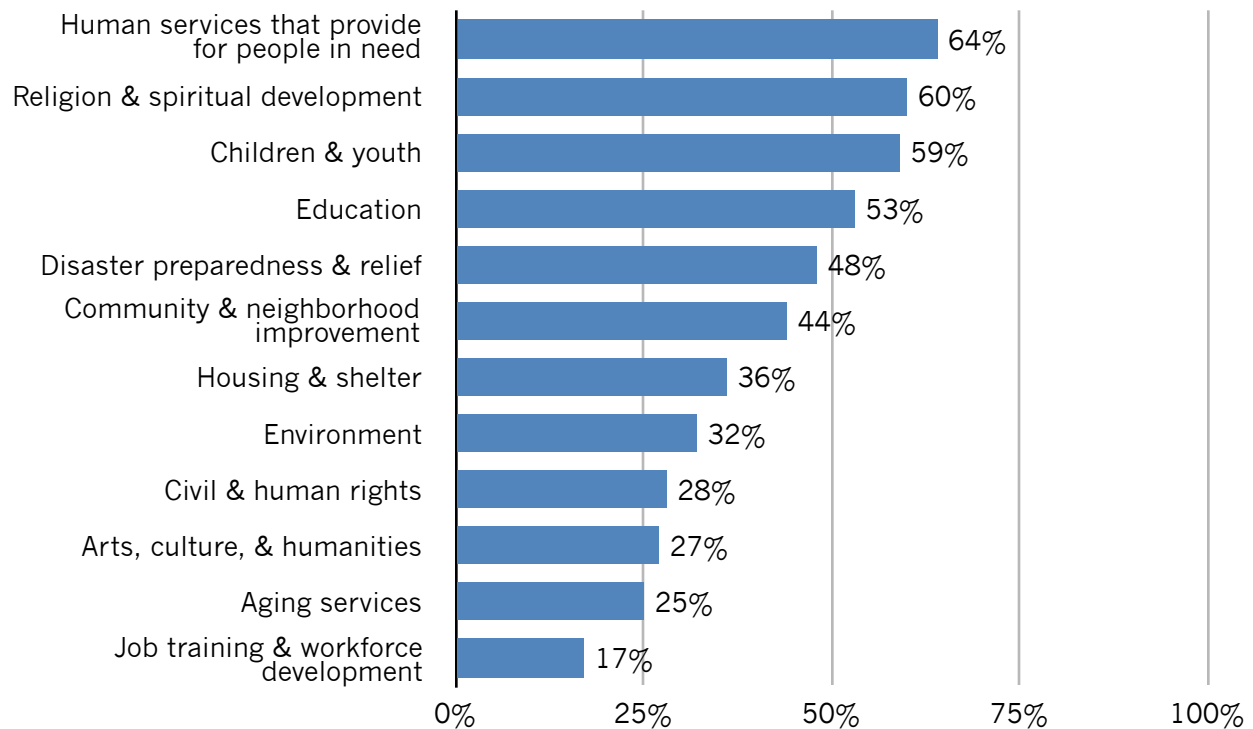
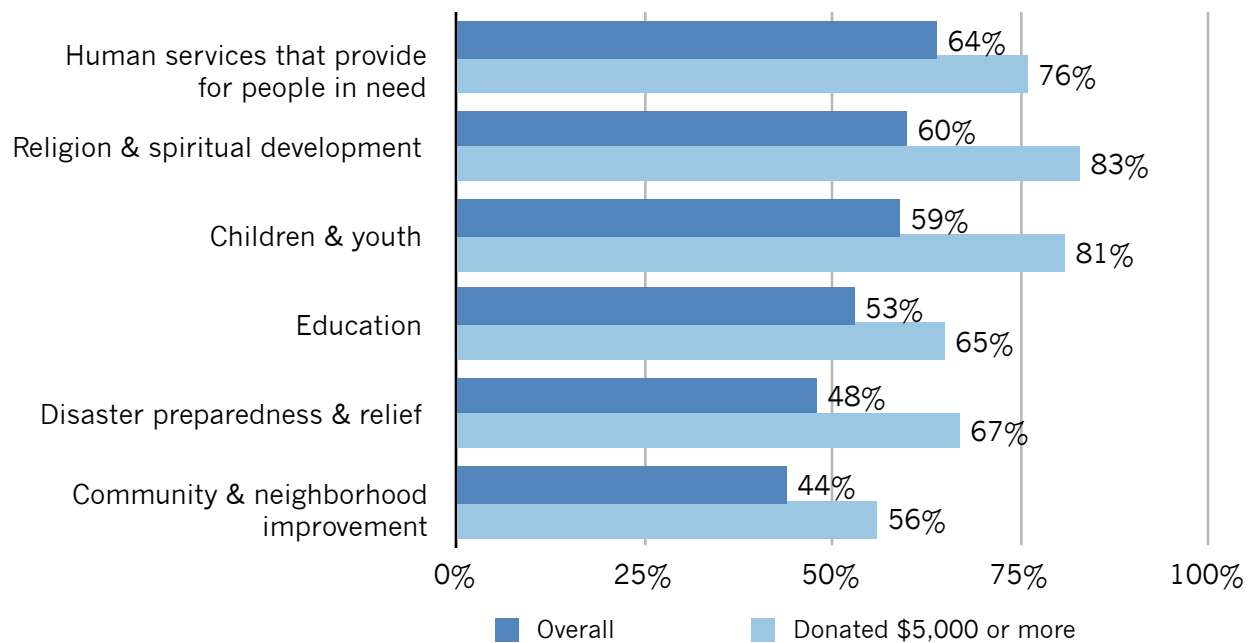
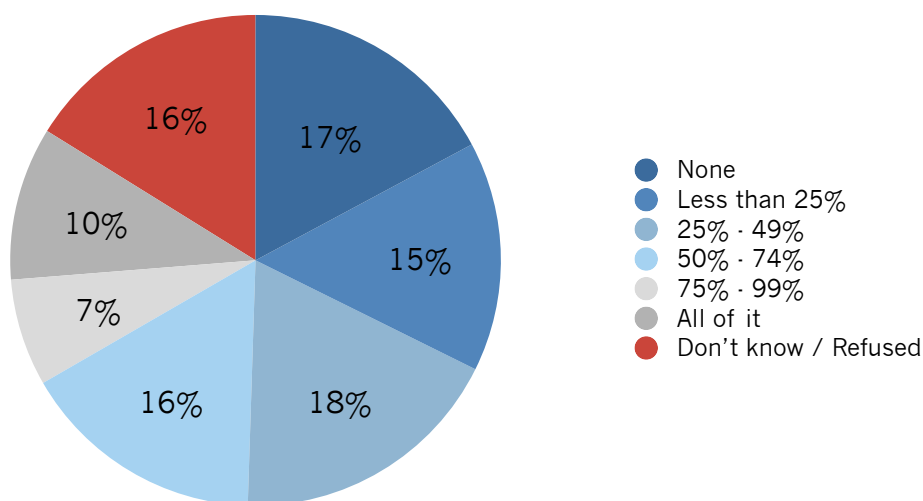


Figure 15: If donated : Donation to issues by amount donated (% Yes)



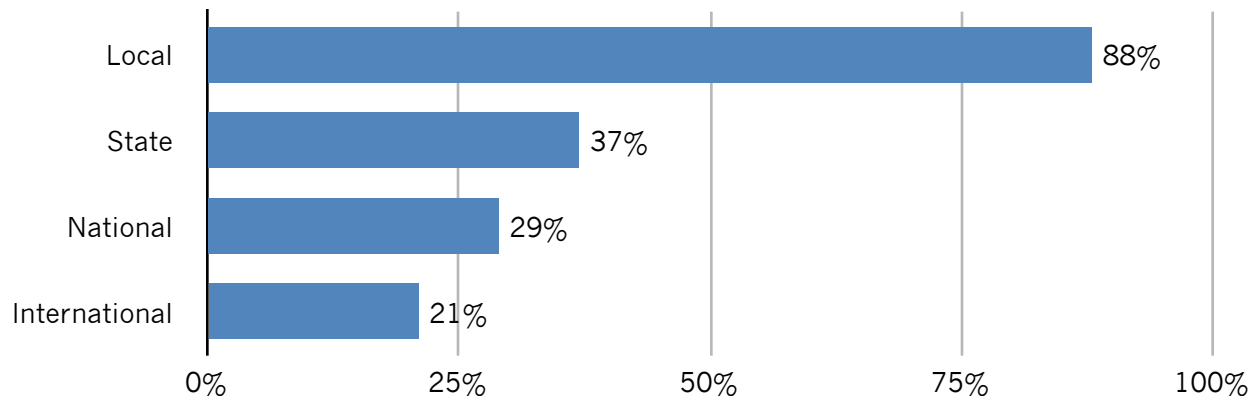
One-third (33%) of all donors give half or more of their donations to religious or faith-based organizations, including 10% who *only* give to such organizations (Figure 16). Seventeen percent, though, do not give any money to faith-based organizations. These numbers are quite similar to 2001.

Figure 16: If donated: About how much of that money went to religious or faith-based organizations?



Metro Atlantans are much more likely to support local issues and organizations than non-local ones (Figure 17). Nearly everyone who donates money to support an issue or organization (88%) usually does so locally, and the farther geographically the issue is from them, the less likely they are to donate to it.

Figure 17: If donated: Would you say that you usually donate to issues and organizations at the local, state, national, or international level? (select all that apply)



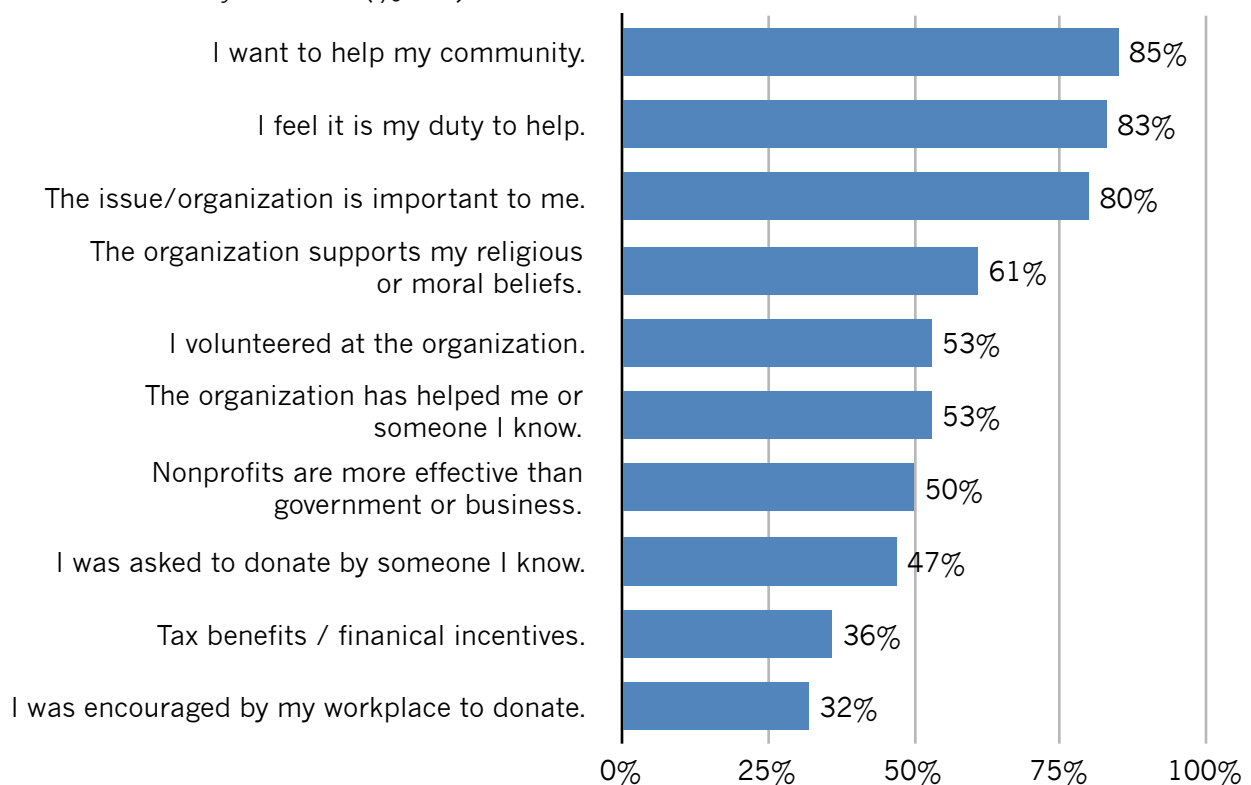
We next asked donors about their reasons for giving (Figure 18). Once again, it appears that the intrinsic motivations “I want to help,” “I feel it is my duty,” and “the issue is important to me” are head and shoulders above all other tested motivators. The most extrinsic motivations—tax benefits and encouragement from the workplace—are the two least important motivations.

The intrinsic motivations are also clear in qualitative followup interviews. Highly engaged individuals say that they give because it feels good, or simply because they want to help. Often times their faith is also quite important to them. They further say that the best way to engage them is to advertise—that is, to let them know about what issues or organizations are out there that need support. Many have their “pet” issues, but most do not support those to the exclusion of other causes.

Seeing how integral religion tends to be, we also conducted interviews with residents who say religion is very important to them. Most we spoke with said that their faith is the entire reason they support these issues and organizations. They support religious organizations financially, but often their house of worship encourages them to be active in their community and support other issues as well.

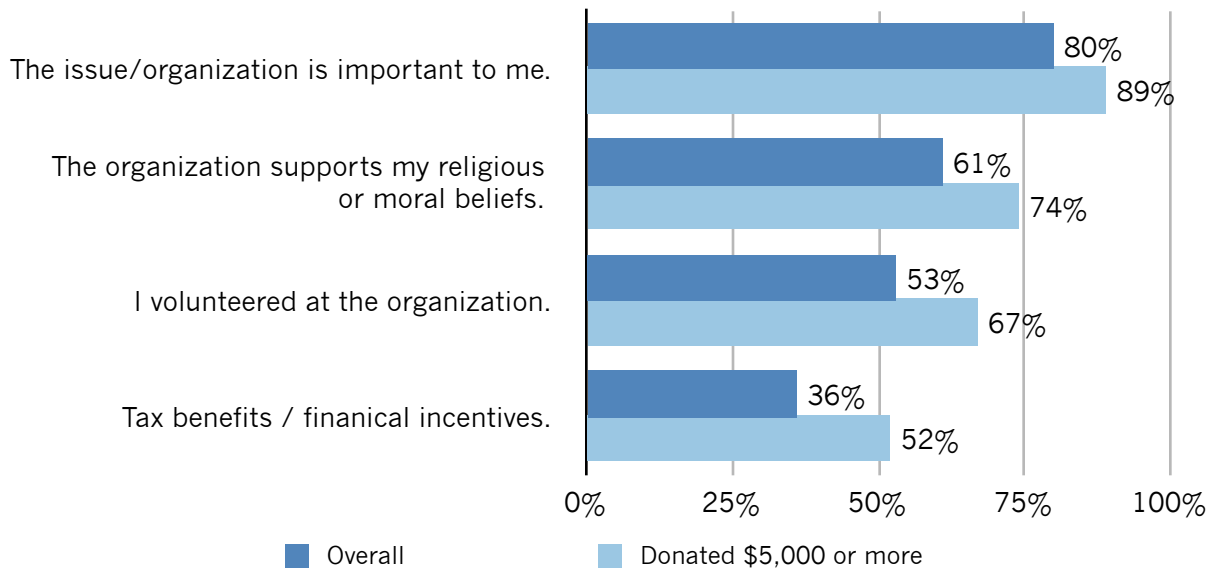
Highly engaged residents are both more likely to donate to almost all of the issues and organizations and to be motivated by each of the following reasons.

Figure 18: If donated: Please tell me if each reason played a role in your decision to donate money in 2010. (% Yes)



And looking at the same graph in a different light, we see several motivations that matter more to those who gave \$5,000 or more in 2010 (Figure 19).

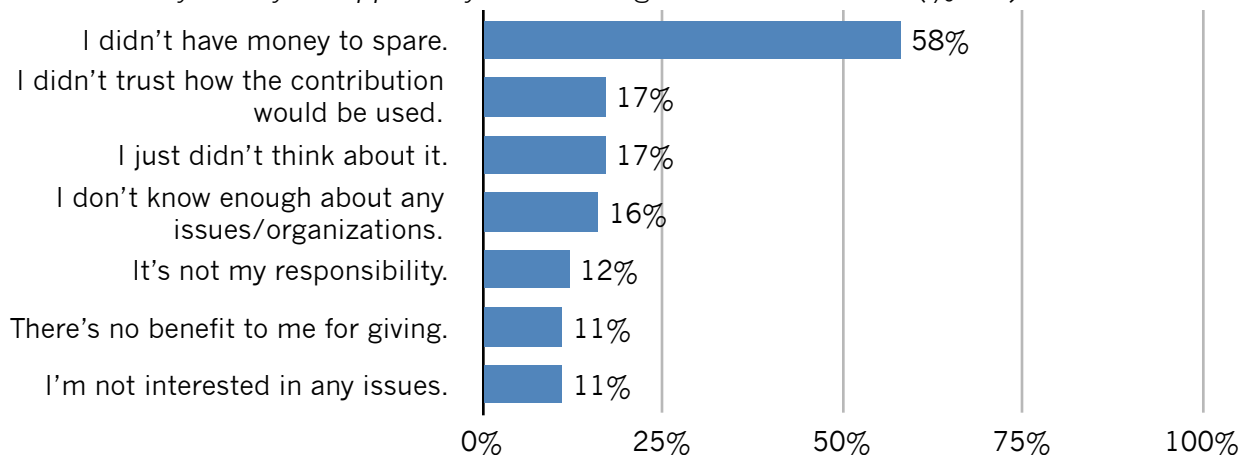
Figure 19: If donated: Please tell me if each reason played a role in your decision to donate money in 2010. (% Yes)



We also followed up with those who did not donate to any issues or organizations to see what prevented them from doing so (Figure 20). As one might expect, having no money to spare is the most popular reason. In fact, it is the only reason of real importance—no other reason was mentioned by more than 20% of respondents. The lowest income groups are more likely to give this as a reason, though a majority of individuals who made over \$90,000 in 2010 also gave this answer. The most highly engaged are more likely to give each of the following as a reason.

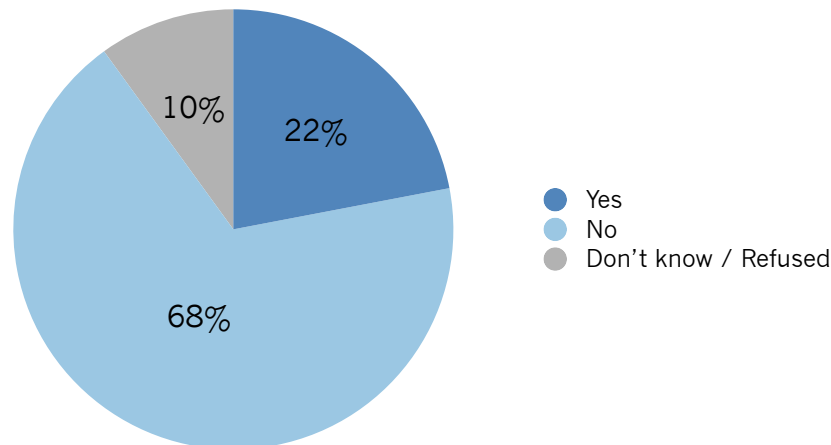
In the qualitative interviews, we heard the less engaged, by and large, say that they are not interested in becoming more engaged, and that there is *nothing* that can be done to engage them. We also spoke with individuals reporting high and low incomes. Low income residents also do not believe there was anything an organization could do to engage them, but many say that they would probably do more if they had more money. High income residents, on the other hand, are all involved with several organizations and have seen positive results from their engagement.

Figure 20: If did not donate: Which of the following reasons describe why you did not donate any money to support any issues or organizations in 2010? (% Yes)



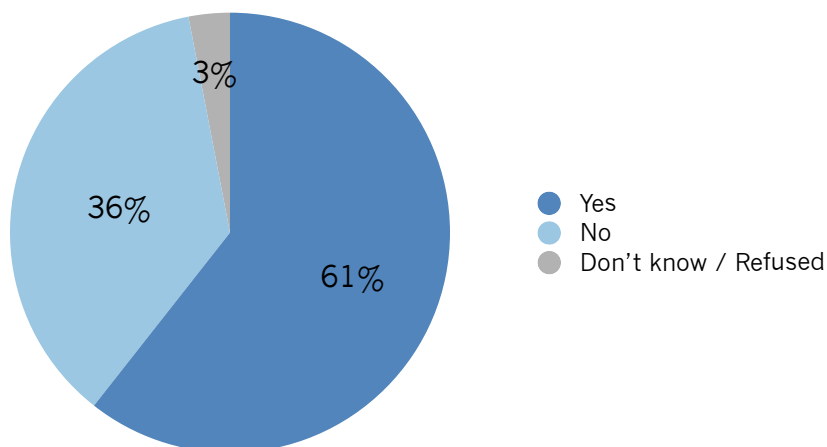
Considering the current economic climate, we asked residents who did not donate in 2010 if they had donated the year before, thinking that perhaps times are getting tougher and pursestrings are drawing tighter (Figure 21). This hypothesis is partially supported, as nearly one-quarter (22%) did donate in 2009, though two-thirds (68%) did not.

Figure 21: If did not donate in 2010: To the best you can remember, did you donate any money to support an issue or organization in 2009?



Looking at a common type of giving aside from formal donations to organizations, we asked respondents if they gave money to friends and family in need during 2010 (Figure 22). Nearly two-thirds (61%) of metro Atlantans say that they did help friends and family with money in 2010.

Figure 22: Other than to a spouse or child, did you give any money to a family member or friend who was in need in 2010?

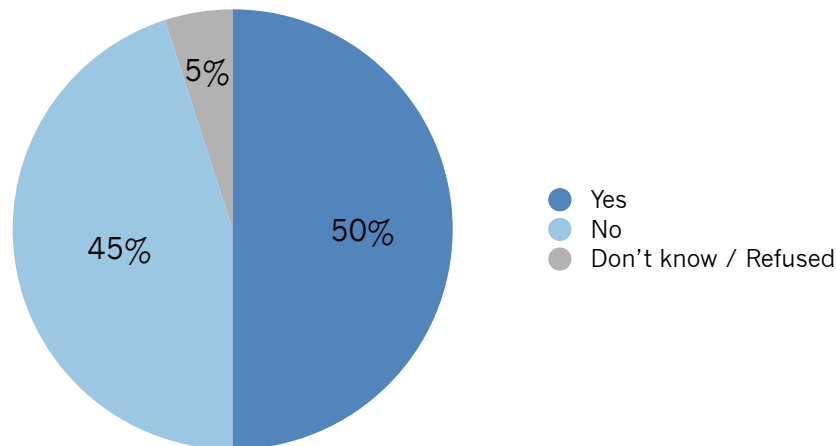


Volunteerism

Another common way to support an issue or organization is by giving one's time, in addition to or instead of money. Figure 23 shows that half (50%) of metro Atlantans volunteered for an organization, including their house of worship, in 2010. This is quite similar to 2001's 48%, but well below the 67% of residents who chose to support an issue or organizations with their money. Among those who did donate, 62% volunteered; conversely, 82% of those who volunteered donated. Also, the groups most likely to volunteer are those with higher levels of education and those to whom religion is more important.

Volunteers, like donors, are more likely to be engaged in their community. They are more likely than those who do not volunteer to know the names of their neighbors, talk about local issues at neighborhood locations, participate in a neighborhood association, and participate in an online message board for their local community.

Figure 23: Did you volunteer your time and service to any issues or organizations in 2010, including a house of worship? This could include time spent helping out at an event, tutoring, doing administrative work, or anything else.



We next asked about the specific issues and organizations for which someone might volunteer (Figure 24). Nearly 60% of people who volunteered did so to support religion and spiritual development. After religion, the next most popular issues will look familiar: children (55%) and human services (52%). After that comes a new entry: community and neighborhood improvement (51%). Residents do not consider this issue nearly as important as others (Figure 10), but more than half of those who volunteer do so to improve their community. The top five issues are rounded out by education (49%), and then there is a substantial drop in popularity among the remaining issues.

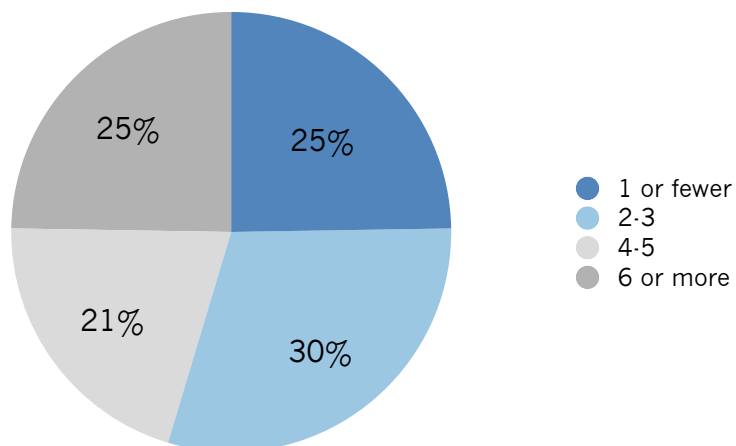
The most highly engaged are more likely to have volunteered for almost all of these issues and organizations.

Figure 24: If volunteered: Did you volunteer for any of the following issues or organizations in 2010?



Nearly half of Atlanta area volunteers (46%) put in four or more hours per week to support their favorite issues and organizations (Figure 25). One-quarter (25%) volunteered 1 hour or less per week, which could include people who only volunteered once for the entire year.

Figure 25: If volunteered: About how many hours per week did you volunteer to support those issues or organizations, or any others, in 2010?



Another facet of volunteering is the specific act of giving one's *expertise*. This could be a contractor building houses for hurricane victims, an artist teaching children how to paint, or anything else where professional experience can be of use. About one-third (35%) of those who volunteered lent their expertise to the organization (Figure 26). Among those who did offer their expertise, a majority (55%) spent most of their volunteer time doing so, and 30% spent all of that time offering their expertise (Figure 27).

Figure 26: If volunteered: As part of your volunteering in 2010, were you lending the organization your professional expertise?

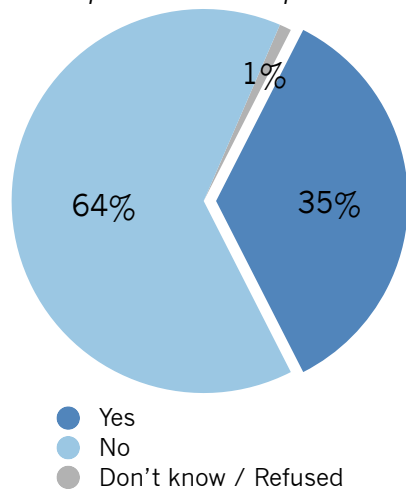
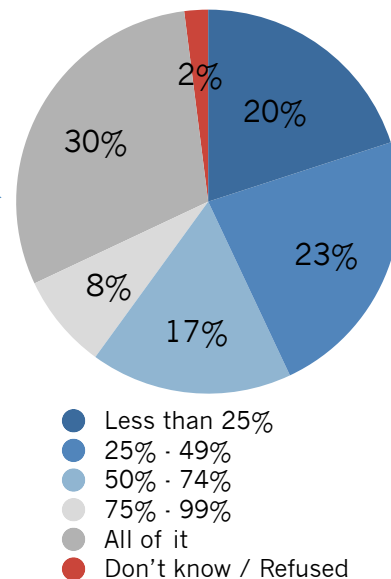


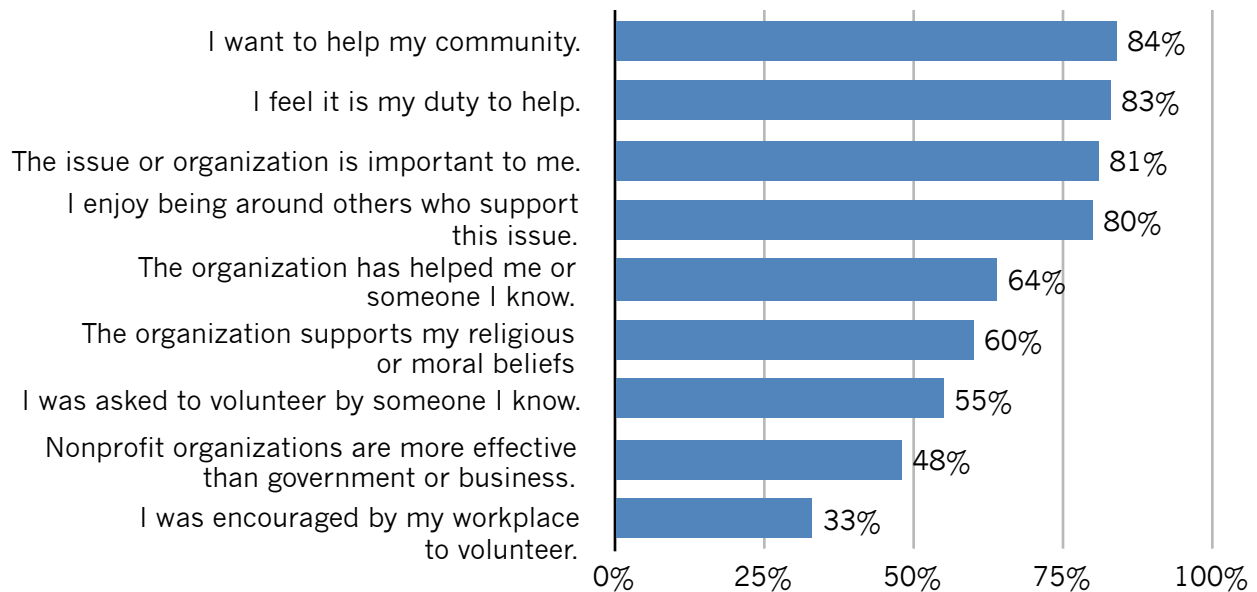
Figure 27: If offered expertise: About how much of your volunteer time in 2010 was spent lending professional expertise?



We next asked volunteers what their motivation is for giving their time (Figure 28). The top four reasons stand apart from the others, and again, most represent the theme of intrinsic motivation. Metro Atlantans who volunteer want to help their community (84%), feel it is their duty to help (83%), and just find the issue important to them (81%). The other popular reason is that they enjoy being around others who support this issue (80%)—perhaps the bond of a common passion can create a sort of community for people.

The most highly engaged are more likely to consider most reasons a motivation to volunteer, but those with the lowest level of engagement were about as likely to say that the organization has helped them or someone they know.

Figure 28: If volunteered: Please tell me if each reason played a role in your decision to volunteer in 2010.



Now turning to those who did not volunteer last year, the story is similar to the one of those who did not donate (Figure 29). The primary reason for not volunteering is having no time to spare (50%), while no other reason was mentioned by even 20% of respondents. Those with higher levels of education and those to whom religion is less important are more likely to offer this as a reason. Additionally, few of those who did not volunteer in 2010 report volunteering in 2009 (Figure 30).

Residents with the lowest levels of engagement are as likely or more likely to offer many of the below as explanations for not volunteering. This pattern is unlike the reasons for not donating, when the more highly engaged were more likely to give each reason. For instance, they are somewhat more likely to say they are not interested in any issues, are not sure how to get involved, or just didn't think about volunteering.

Figure 29: If did not volunteer: Which of the following reasons describe why you did not volunteer your time in 2010?

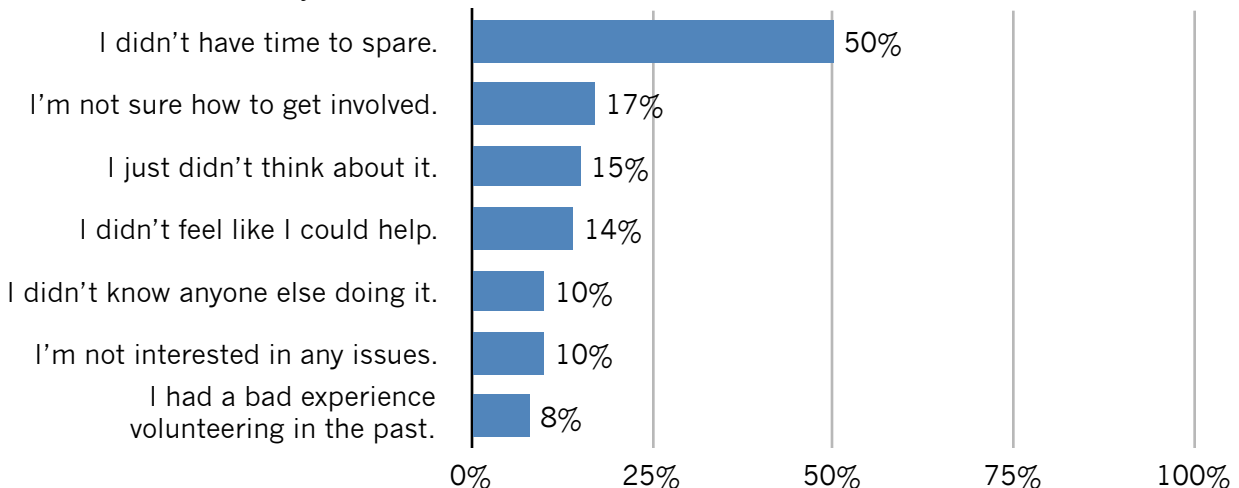
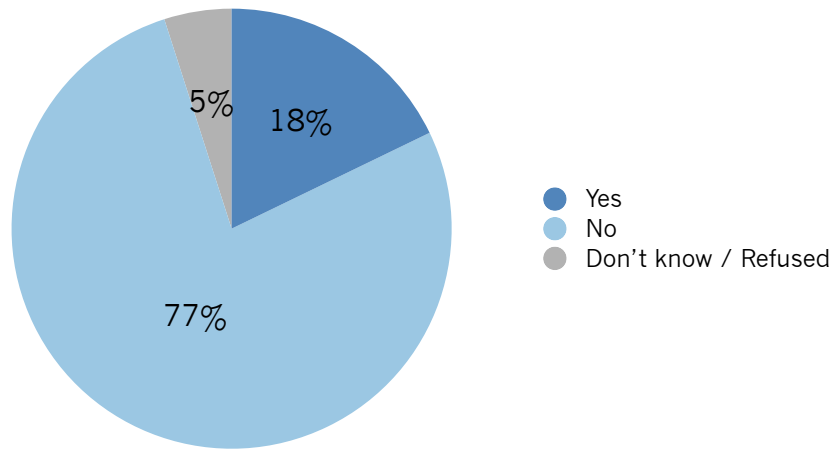


Figure 30: If did not volunteer in 2010: To the best you can remember, did you volunteer at all in 2009?

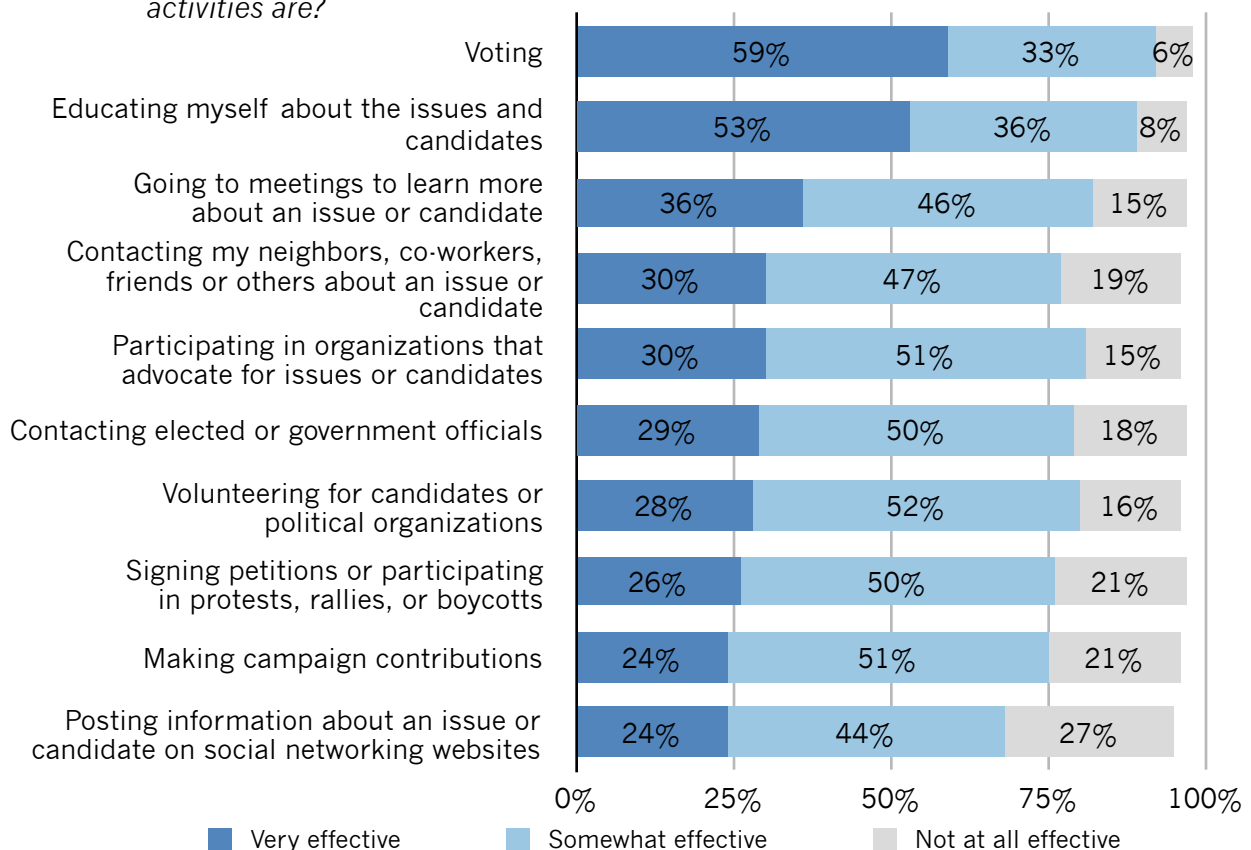


Public Policy Involvement

We asked metro Atlantans about the effectiveness of several activities aimed at influencing policy and their experiences participating in those activities (Figure 31). Overall, two-thirds or more consider each of the actions at least somewhat effective. Two stand out: voting and educating oneself about issues and candidates. It is interesting to note that both of the methods perceived as the most effective are personal, largely solitary activities, rather than group activities or direct communication with public officials or potential supporters. The more highly engaged are more likely to consider each of the activities to be very effective.

The one real commonality we discovered among almost all the groups with which we conducted followup interviews was a general lack of faith in politicians, and sometimes the political system. Low income individuals feel powerless politically and don't feel that politicians really care about them. The most religious individuals we spoke with are not very involved in the political process. The respondents with the lowest levels of engagement feel little political power, and even the most highly engaged indicated little faith in political figures. High income individuals, though, are different. Based on our interviews, they feel that they have a great deal of power politically, and that politicians care about what they have to say.

Figure 31: Thinking about what individuals can do to influence elected officials regarding the issues mentioned previously, how effective do you think each of the following activities are?



Only one-third (36%) of respondents report participating in any of these public policy related activities in 2010, including voting (Figure 32). Political engagement appears to increase with education level—24% of individuals with only a high school diploma report being active, compared to 47% with a post-graduate degree. Figure 33 also shows the comparative percentages of residents who donate, those who volunteer, and those who attempt to influence public policy. Residents who are politically involved are somewhat more likely to be engaged in their communities, but not to the extent of individuals who donate and volunteer to support issues and organizations.

Figure 32: Did you participate in any of these types of activities aimed at making sure your concerns are addressed by elected and appointed officials in 2010?

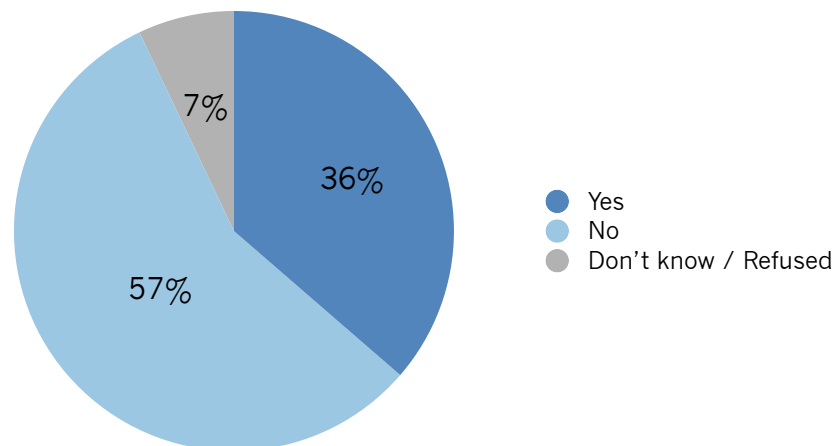
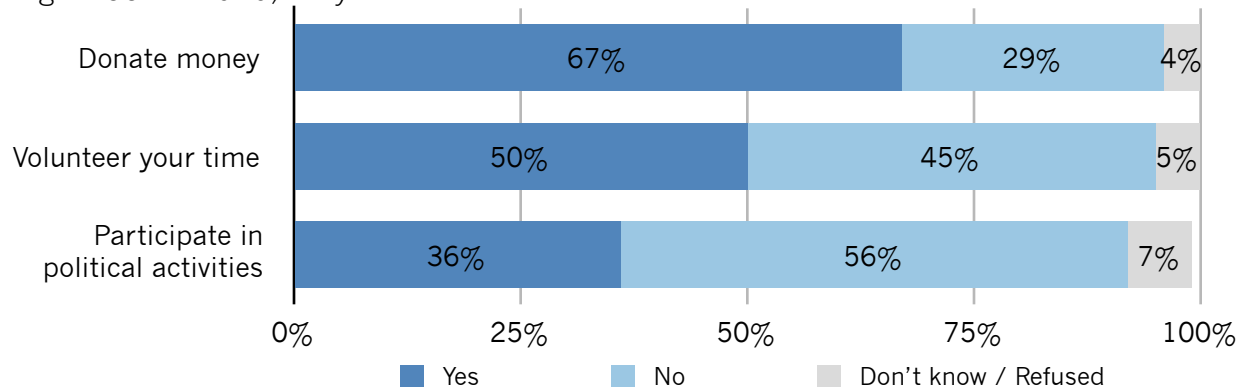
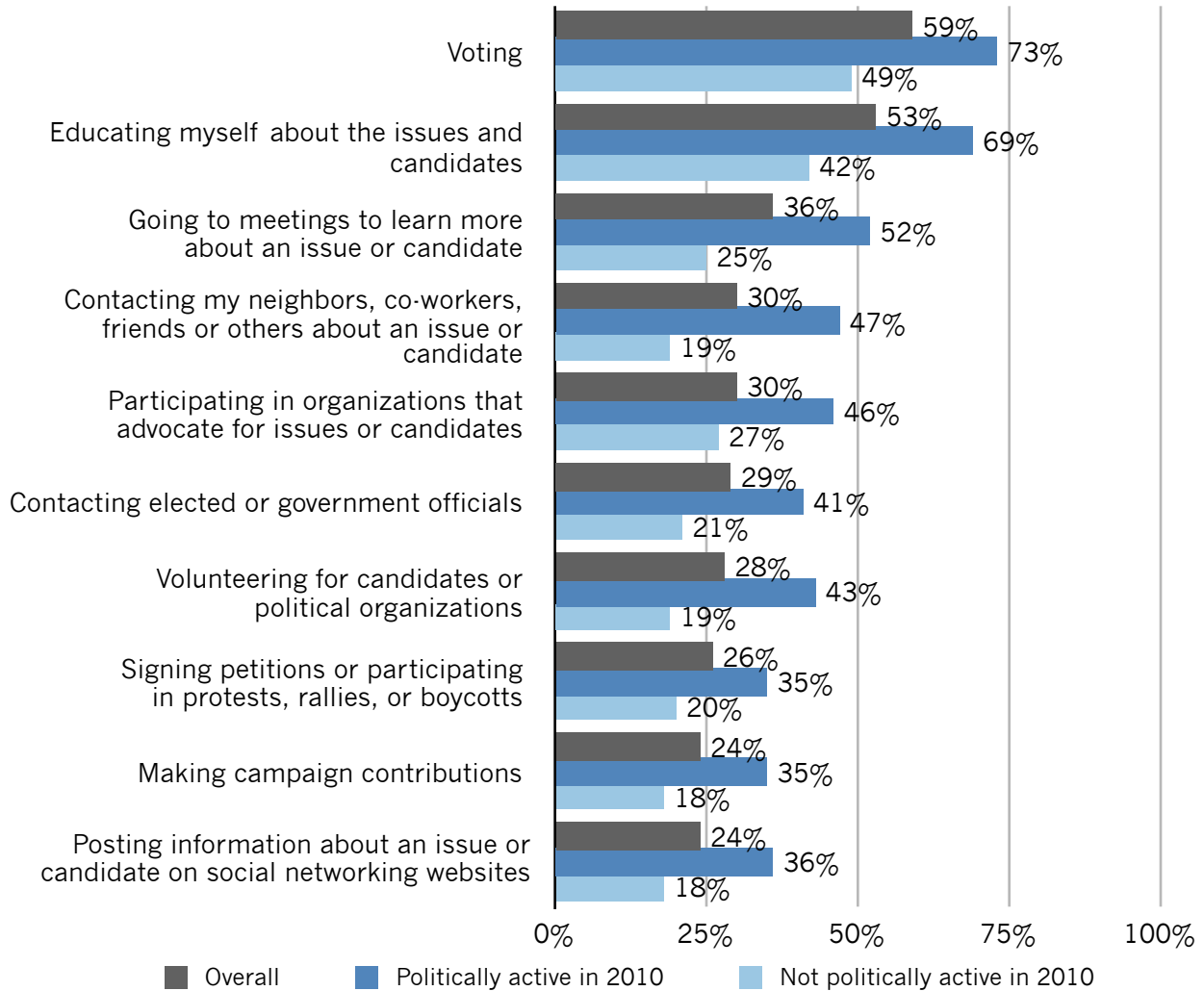


Figure 33: In 2010, did you...



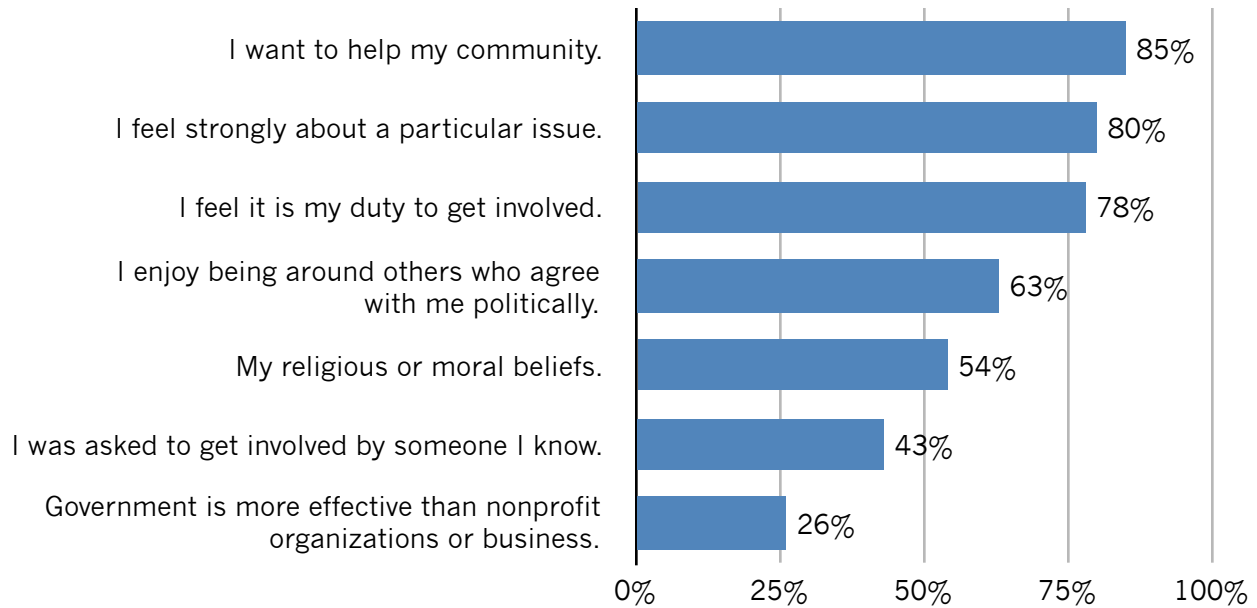
Further, those who did not participate in political activities are markedly less likely to consider them effective, and vice versa. (Figure 34). Similarly, those people who did not donate, those who did not volunteer, and those who did not participate politically are far less likely to believe that individuals should have a great deal of responsibility in improving their communities.

Figure 34: Effectiveness of political activities by political involvement (% Very effective)



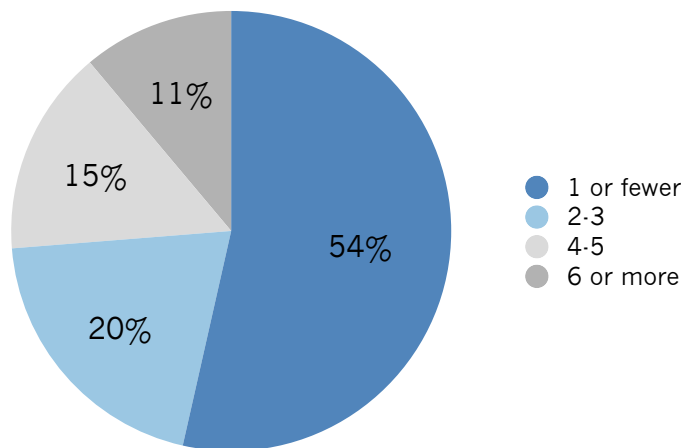
Those metro Atlantans who did participate in some activity aimed at making sure their concerns are addressed by elected and appointed officials are, once again, motivated by intrinsic reasons (Figure 35). They want to help their communities (85%), they feel strongly about an issue (80%), and they feel it is their duty to help (78%). These activities can also serve to form a sort of community, as seen in the 63% of people who enjoy being around others who agree with them politically.

Figure 35: If politically active: Please tell me if each reason played a role in your decision to participate in 2010. (% Yes)



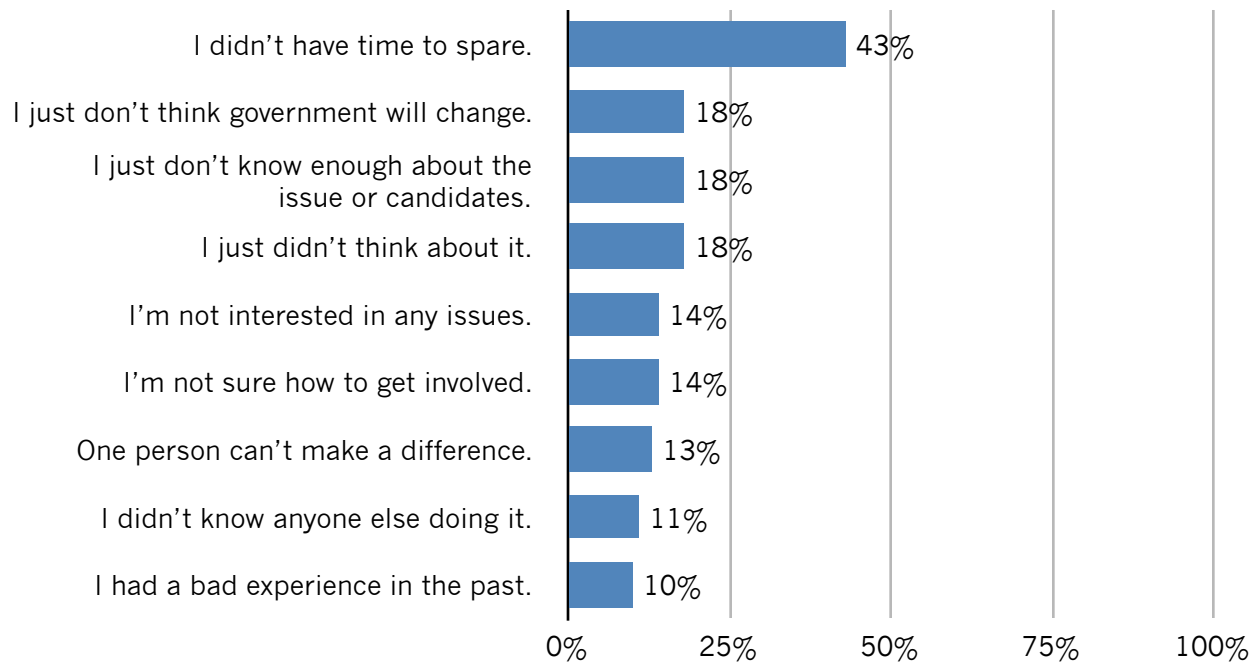
Of those who did participate in some type of political activity in 2010, most only did so one hour per week or less, including those who may have only participated once the entire year (Figure 36).

Figure 36: If politically active: About how many hours per week did you spend in 2010 participating in political activities?



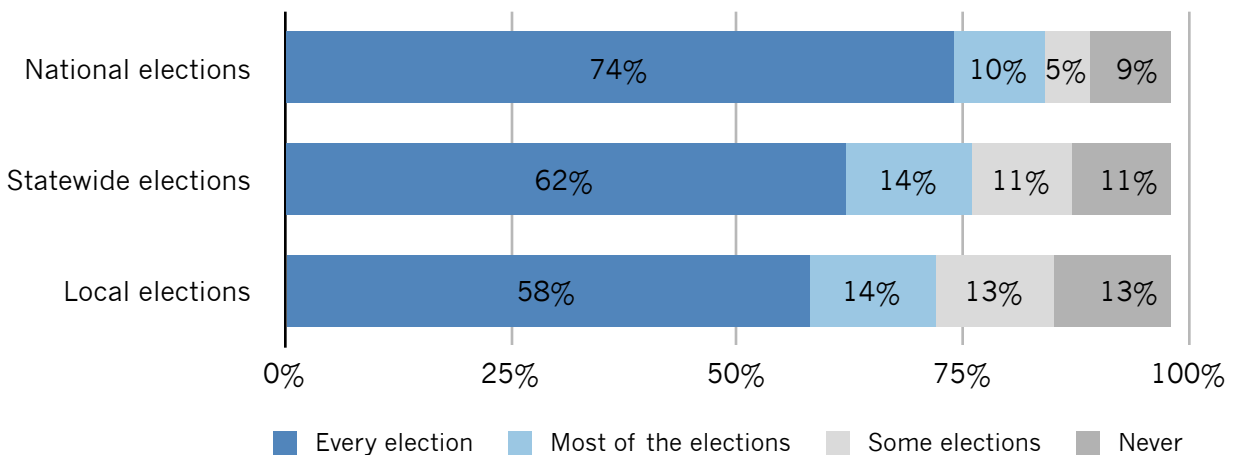
For those who are not politically active, the story is a familiar one—they simply do not think they have the time to participate (Figure 37).

Figure 37: If not politically active: Which of the following reasons describe why you did not participate in political activities in 2010?



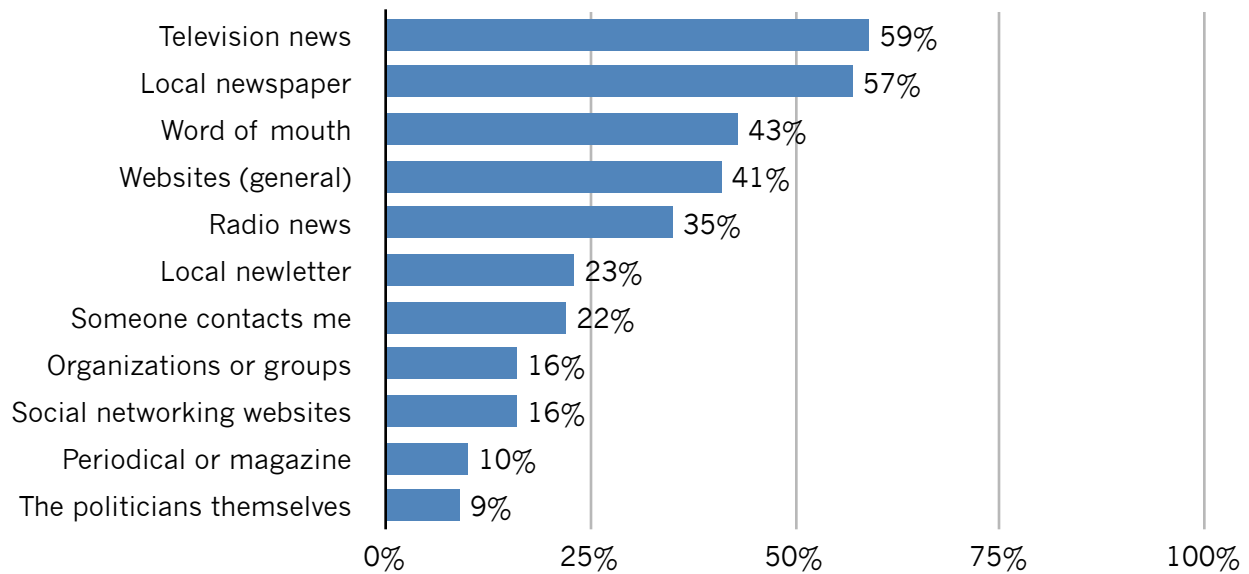
Respondents report being quite active when it comes to voting (Figure 38). Over half say they vote every chance they get at every level of government, and they are most likely to vote in national elections. Individuals with higher levels of education and income are much more likely to vote in every election.

Figure 38: How often do you vote in...



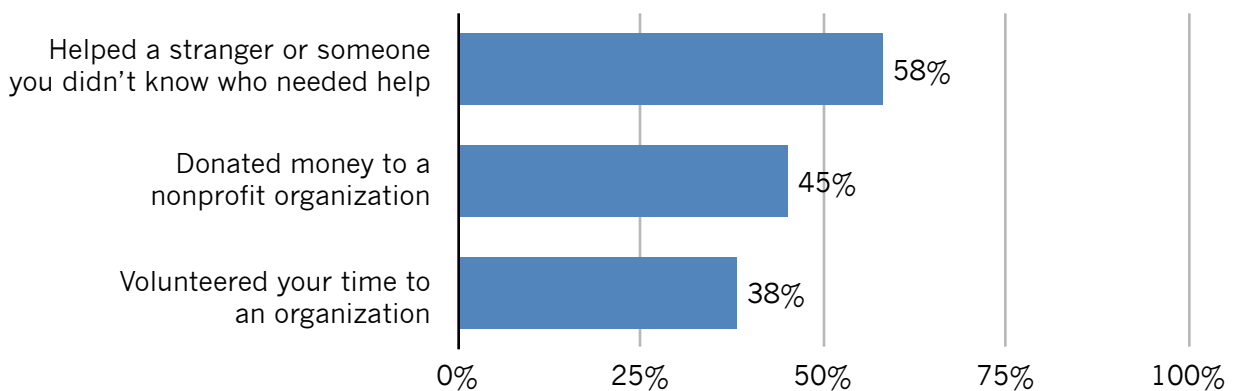
Metro Atlantans are most likely to get information on the community and policy issues that are important to them from the television and newspapers (Figure 39).

Figure 39: Where do you normally get your information about your community or the policy issues that are important to you? (Select all that apply)



Finally, Gallup has developed a civic engagement index based on a brief series of questions asking about respondents' behaviors in the past month, including donating, volunteering, and helping strangers. By taking the average of the three percentages, Gallup uses this index to compare levels of civic engagement across countries, and it has found that in 2010 the United States was, in fact, the most engaged of all the studied nations. We incorporated the index into this survey, and found that metro Atlanta does not fare nearly as well (Figure 40). The region receives a score of 47, compared to the national score of 60. This puts metro Atlanta right between Hong Kong and Denmark, and ties it with Turkmenistan.

Figure 40: In the past month, have you... (% Yes)



Summary

- ❖ Nearly two-thirds of metro Atlantans consider themselves at least somewhat involved in their neighborhood or the broader community, though more than twice as many say they are not at all involved than say they are very involved.
- ❖ A majority of residents has some sort of informal ties to their community, either by knowing the names of their neighbors or talking about important local issues with community members. The degree of formal ties is somewhat lower, with only about one in three residents participating in some sort of neighborhood association, and one in five involved with some sort of message board for their community.
- ❖ Most metro Atlantans believe that the responsibility of improving their community lies with several entities, particularly with individuals and the local government.
- ❖ Many issues are important to residents, especially those relating to education and children and youth. Also important are the ones that can have an immediate, direct impact on individuals in need: human services and disaster preparedness and relief. Residents are most likely to be interested in issues such as these for intrinsic reasons. They enjoy helping. They want to make a difference. They want to improve their community.
- ❖ Most metro Atlantans donated money to support an issue or organization in 2010, a decrease of 13% from 2001. One-quarter gave more than \$1,000, and the most popular destinations for donations were human services, religion and spiritual development, children and youth, and education. Individuals gave, once again, for intrinsic reasons. They want to help. They feel it is their duty. The issue is important to them.
- ❖ The main reason, by far, that discourages residents from donating money is simply that they do not have the money to spare.
- ❖ Half of Metro Atlantans volunteered their time and service in support of an issue or organization in 2010, and they are most likely to do so in support of religion and spiritual development. The other most popular issues are children and youth, education, human services, and community and neighborhood improvement. Nearly half of volunteers gives four or more hours per week, and about one-third lent their professional expertise. Residents' motivations for volunteering are dominated by intrinsic ones, but also include the idea of community—they enjoy being around others who support the same issues they do.
- ❖ Similar to their reason for not donating, respondents who do not volunteer say they do not have the time to spare.
- ❖ The only political activities that a majority of metro Atlantans considers very effective are voting and educating oneself about the issues and candidates. Probably related, only about one in three residents reports participating in any political activity in 2010. Those who did participate owe it to the intrinsic motivations of wanting to help their community, feeling strongly about an issue, feeling it is their duty to get involved, and enjoying being around others who agree with them politically. More than half spent an hour or less each week participating politically.
- ❖ Those who did not participate politically say that they just don't have the spare time to do so.

-
- ❖ Throughout the survey, there are certain subgroups that are more likely to donate, volunteer, and participate politically. In general, those who are more engaged in their community, who have a higher income, and who are more religious are more likely to do each. To examine these trends more closely, we conducted followup qualitative interviews with respondents from each group.
- The most highly engaged echo the quantitative finding that intrinsic motivations are the most important. They say giving their time and money just feels good, and that it has always felt good. The less engaged, on the other hand, are just not interested in being engaged or giving, and say there is nothing that can be done about it.
 - The residents to whom religion is the most important say that their faith is the most important motivator for their giving and participation. They are also urged by their faith community to support other issues and organizations.
 - Every interviewee with a higher level of income participates in more than one organization, and has seen the positive change that can come from helping. Lower income individuals only participate at their house of worship, if anywhere, and only a few report seeing small positive changes as a result of their help. Further, the higher income individuals believe they have a great deal of power politically, while the lower income individuals feel they have none.

Implications

Greater Atlanta's residents are fairly active and engaged in their communities. Most know and talk to their neighbors, and most are active in neighborhood associations and internet communities when they are available. But there is room for improvement—about half of the residents we spoke with say they do not participate in such activities, either because the opportunities for involvement are not available, or because they are not aware of them. Further, the data show that building community around shared interests and views is important to people. It would seem, then, that either creating or popularizing opportunities to develop formal ties in a community could yield great results in terms of community engagement and, in turn, supporting issues, organizations, and public policy.

Metro Atlantans are interested in a variety of issues, though some more than others. Virtually anything involving the education and development of children, for instance, will draw support. Perhaps the more revealing trend, though, is residents' support of human services and disaster relief. When individuals donate their time or money in support of these issues, they are more likely to see clear, immediate results from their donation. Anecdotally, we heard that some of the most engaged groups had seen positive change come about as a result of their help, while the less engaged had not seen such change. Remembering fondly the beneficial results of previous giving or involvement could certainly encourage someone to give or become involved in the future, and eventually lend itself to the intrinsic motivation of simply wanting to help or even enjoying helping.

Some issues consistently receive little attention from residents. The arts, job training, and aging services, for example, are always toward the bottom of metro Atlantans' priorities when it comes to importance, donating, and volunteering. These are no doubt important issues, but they can be easily overlooked when individuals are considering where to spend their time and money. As The Community Foundation decides where to concentrate its resources, it should certainly take into account residents' preferences, but less popular issues should not be forgotten.

Finally, faith matters. We consistently see that the individuals who hold religion to be very important in their lives are more likely to be engaged. Many find a sense of community in their house of worship, so they choose to give their time and money there. Largely, though, they do not *only* contribute to religious causes. Their faith and their faith communities often encourage them to support organizations throughout their communities and make a difference.

Methods

The Schapiro Group (TSG) surveyed 2,700 metro Atlanta residents to explore their perceptions of and experience with community investment and engagement. TSG sampled residential phone numbers within The Community Foundation's 23-county service area to obtain telephone survey data April-June 2011. Included in the 2,700 surveys are 200 completed by individuals who only use a cell phone, and do not have a landline telephone. The survey took approximately 13.5 minutes to complete. TSG surveyed at least 100 people in each of the counties, and oversampled the four most populous—Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton, and Gwinnett. The overall results were then weighted and are demographically and geographically representative of the 23-county area. The margin of sampling error for the regionwide results is $\pm 1.9\%$. The margin of sampling error for results within individual geographies and demographic subgroups is greater than that of the region, depending on the size of the subgroup. When applicable, data are compared to similar data from other sources.

At the conclusion of each survey, the caller asked the respondent if a member of the research team could follow up with him or her at a later time for further information. As important subgroups became evident through the data analysis process, interviewers again called respondents within those groups who had previously agreed to be contacted again. The researchers conducted forty semi-structured qualitative interviews relating to the survey instrument as well as items geared specifically to their subgroup. Researchers conducted fifteen interviews with individuals who are not very engaged, ten with individuals who are highly engaged, five with individuals to whom religion is very important, five with low income individuals, and five with high income individuals.

Demographics

Figure 41: Are you currently registered to vote?

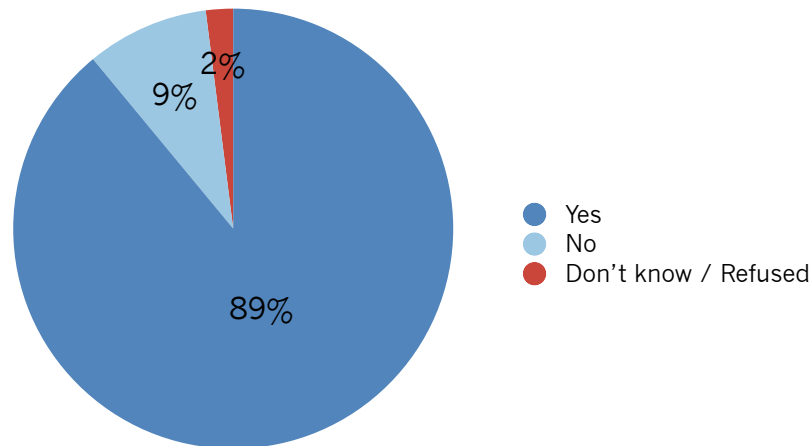


Figure: 42: Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or something else?

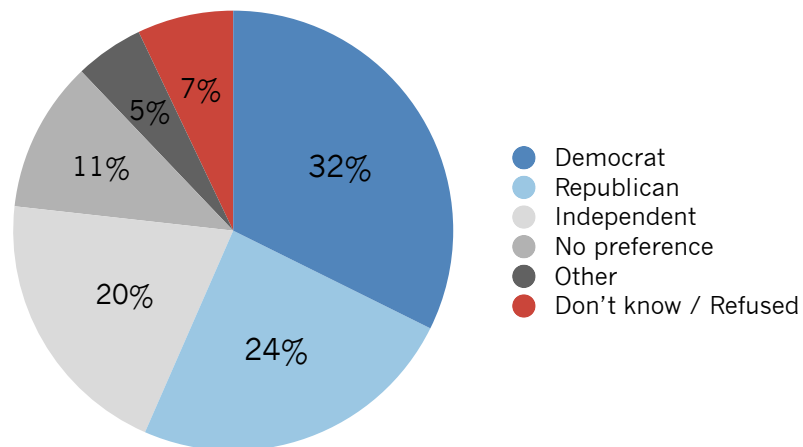


Figure 43: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

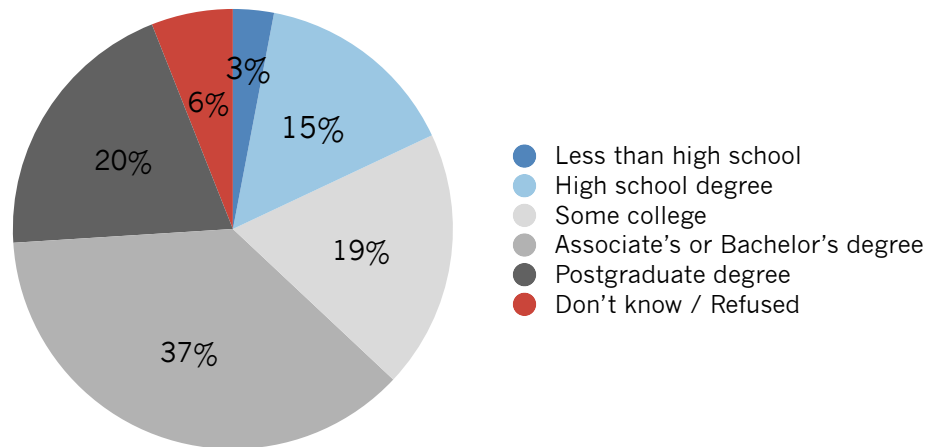


Figure 44: Which of the following best describes your marital status?

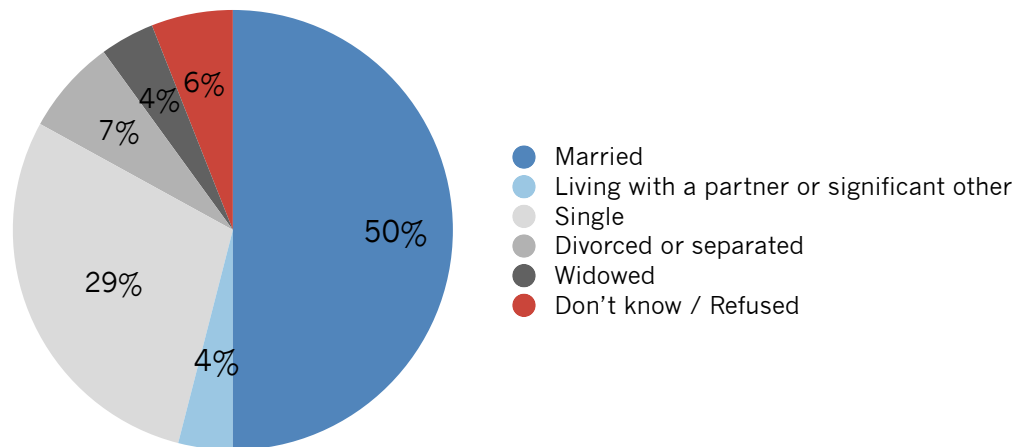


Figure 45: Do you have any children under 18 living in your household?

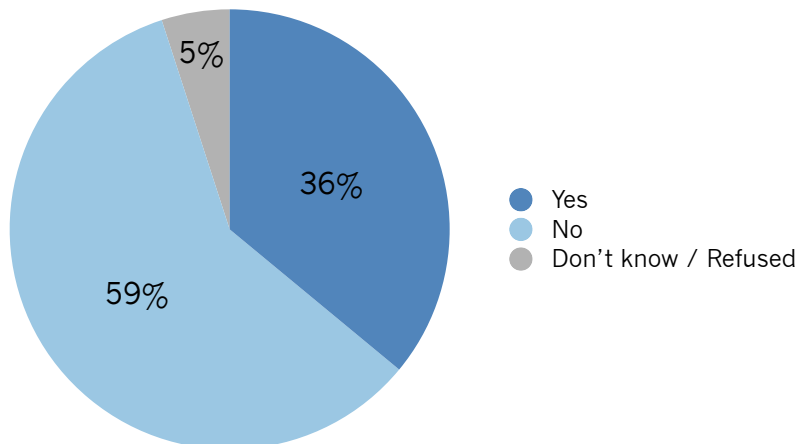


Figure 46: Age

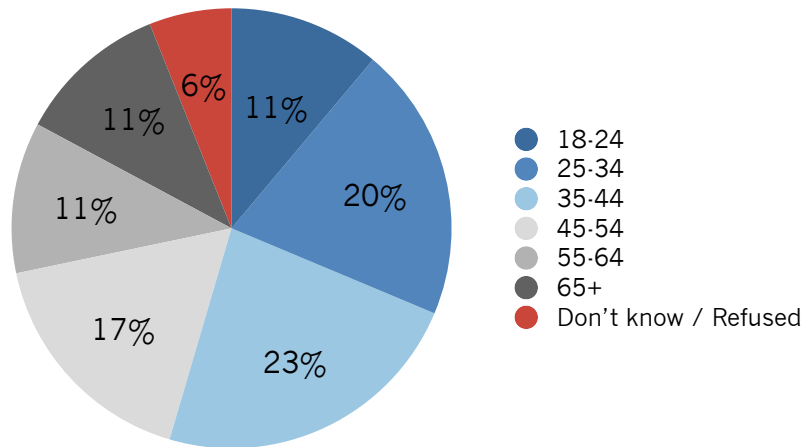


Figure 47: Race

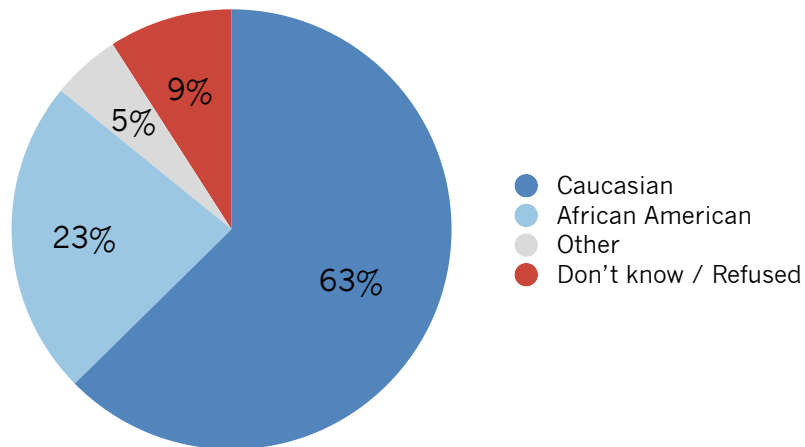


Figure 48: How important would you say religion is in your own life?

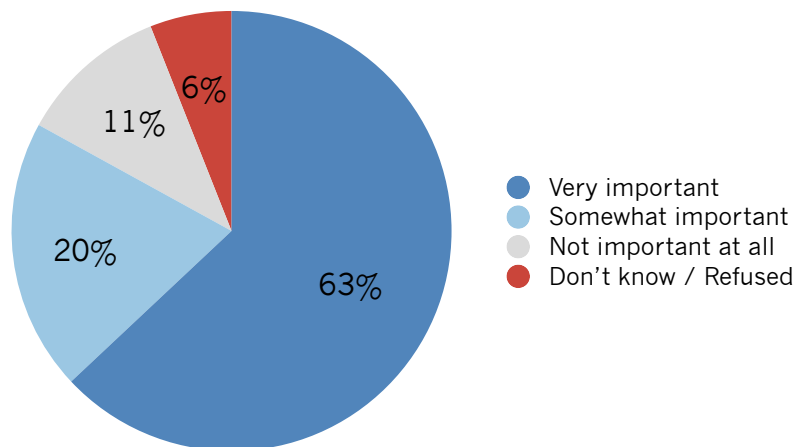


Figure 49: Income

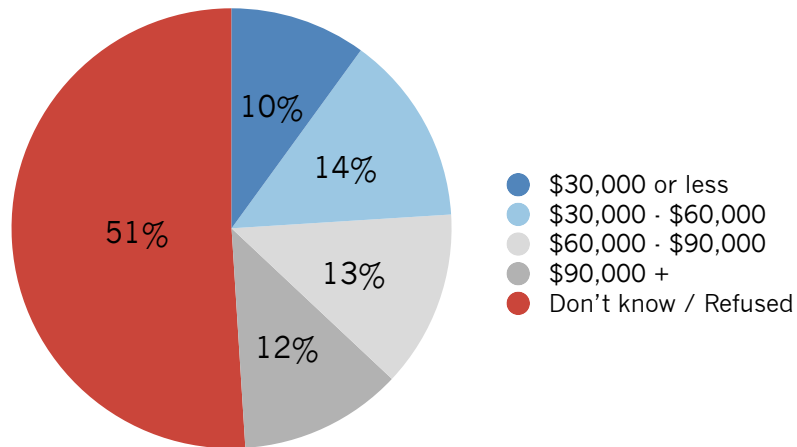
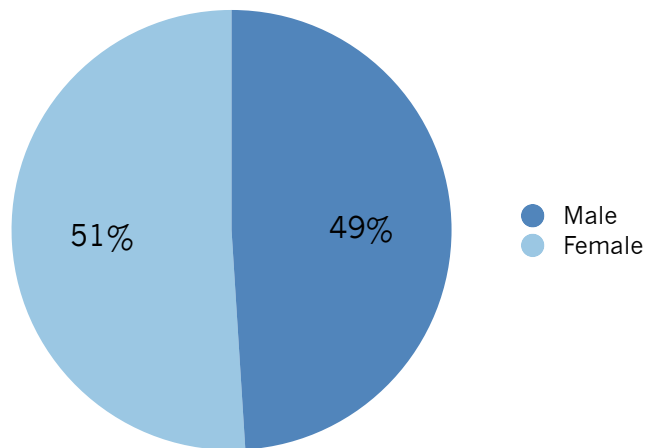
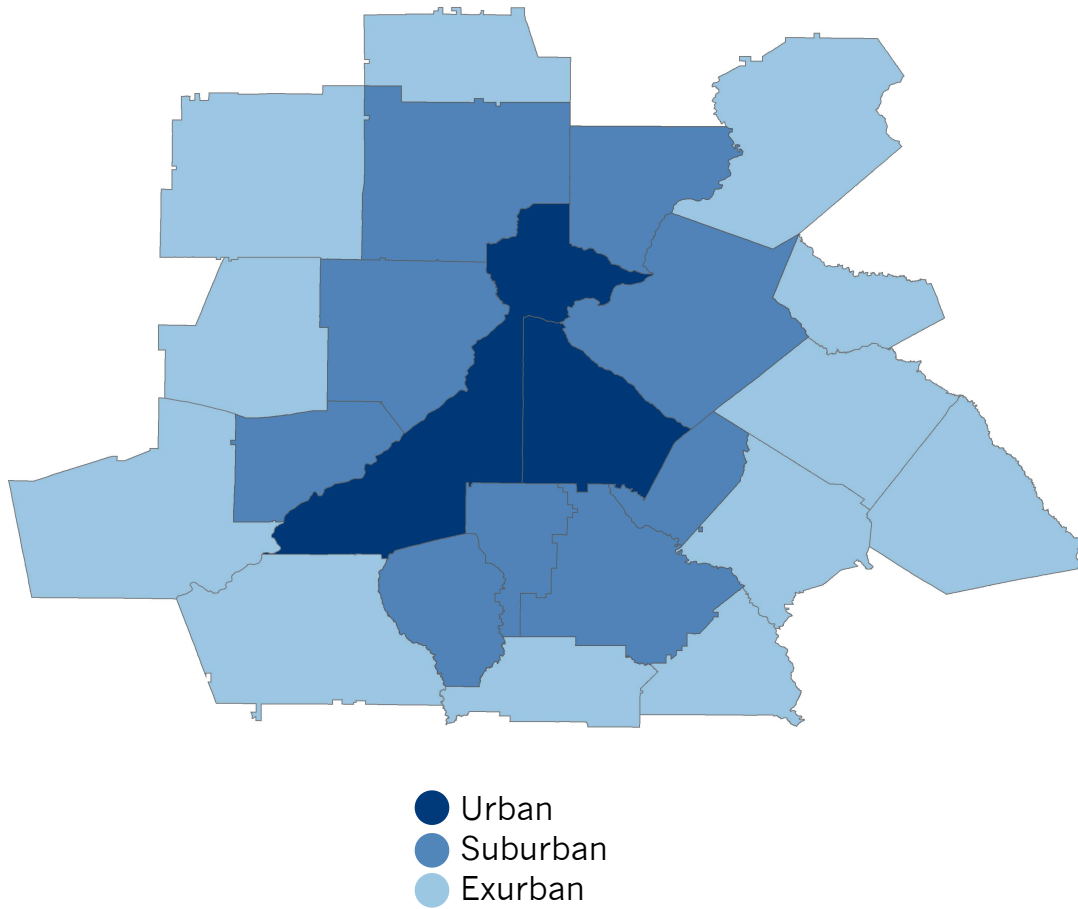


Figure 50: Gender



Appendix I: Map of Region



Appendix II: Survey Instrument

Hello, my name is _____ from TSG, a Georgia research firm. We're conducting a survey of residents in your area to get your opinions on issues affecting your community. This phone number was selected at random. We are not selling anything, and I will not ask for a contribution or donation. For this study I need to speak to the person in your household age 18 or over who had the most recent birthday who is home at this time.

1. What county do you currently live in?
Barrow, Bartow, Butts, Carroll, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb,
Coweta, Dekalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett,
Hall, Henry, Morgan, Newton, Paulding, Pickens,
Rockdale, Spalding, Walton1-23
Some other countyTerminate
Don't know / Refused.....Terminate
2. (If live in Fulton or Dekalb) Do you live within the Atlanta city limits?
Yes.....1
No.....2
Don't know / Refused.....3

Civic Engagement

3. Thinking about your neighborhood or the broader community, how involved would you say you are?
Very involved1
Somewhat involved2
Not at all involved3
Don't know / Refused.....4

When you think about improving your community, how much responsibility should each of the following have in improving it? [Code: A great deal 1, Some 2, A little 3, None 4, Don't know/Refused 5]

4. Nonprofit organizations
5. Businesses or corporations
6. Faith-based or religious organizations
7. Neighborhood associations
8. Local government, such as city or county government
9. State government
10. Federal government
11. Individuals

My next few questions are about you and your neighborhood.

12. Would you say that you know the names of most or all of your immediate neighbors?
- Yes.....1
No.....2
Don't know / Refused.....3
13. Do you ever talk about local issues with your neighbors or other community members at places like parks, grocery stores, restaurants, or other local businesses?
- Yes.....1
No.....2
Don't know / Refused.....3
14. Is there a neighborhood association, civic club, or homeowners group for your neighborhood? [If YES: Are you a member of the association/club?]
- Yes, is a member.....1
Yes, is NOT a member.....2
No.....3
Not sure.....4
Don't know/Refused.....5
15. Is there a website, listserv, or online message board for your neighborhood or local community? [If YES: Do you participate by visiting the website or reading messages?]
- Yes, does participate.....1
Yes, does NOT participate.....2
No.....3
Not sure.....4
Don't know / Refused.....5
16. In your spare time, do you participate in any groups or organizations that are not work-related and are intended address a specific issue, meet a specific need, or help your community or the metro Atlanta area?
- Yes.....1
No.....2
Don't know / Refused.....3

(If group/organization member) I am now going to read a list of clubs and organizations that some people belong to. Please tell me whether or not you currently participate in each one. By participate, I mean attend meetings or volunteer time to help the club or organization. [Code: Yes 1, No 2, Don't know/Refused 3]

17. A business, civic or professional group
18. A fraternity or sorority
19. A political action organization such as the ACLU or NRA
20. An issue specific service organization such as the Red Cross or the Piedmont Park Conservancy
21. A labor union
22. An online community, where members mainly meet and communicate through message boards or email
23. A parent involvement organization

Philanthropic Giving

I'm going to list several issues that people often support through donations of money, time, or expertise. For each of the following issues, I'd like you to tell me if it is extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not important at all to you personally. [Code: *Extremely important 1, Very important 2, Somewhat important 3, or Not important at all 4, Don't know / Refused 5*]

[Rotate]

24. Arts, culture & humanities
25. Education
26. Environment
27. Job training and workforce development
28. Housing & shelter
29. Disaster preparedness & relief
30. Children & youth
31. Human services that provide for people in need
32. Civil and human rights
33. Community and neighborhood improvement
34. Religion & spiritual development
35. Aging services

Thinking about the issues that are important to you, which of the following reasons describe why they are important to you? [Code: *Yes 1, No 2, Don't know/Refused 3*]

[Rotate]

36. Motivated by faith
37. Personal experience with that issue (or friends and family experience)
38. I enjoy helping and want to make a difference
39. I want to improve my community
40. This issue is not receiving enough attention
41. I'm just interested in it

42. Did you donate any money to support any of the issues we just talked about, or to any others, in 2010?
Yes.....1
No.....2
Don't know / Refused.....3

(If donated) Did you donate money to any of the following issues or organizations in 2010? [Code: *Yes 1, No 2, Don't know/Refused 3*]

43. Arts, culture & humanities
44. Education
45. Environment

46. Job training and workforce development
47. Housing & shelter
48. Disaster preparedness & relief
49. Children & youth
50. Human services that provide for people in need
51. Civil and human rights
52. Community and neighborhood improvement
53. Religion & spiritual development
54. Aging services

55. (If donated) About how much money, including the cash value of any property, did you and members of your household donate to support those or any other issues or organizations in 2010?

\$1 - \$100	1
\$101 - \$500	2
\$501 - \$1,000	3
\$1,001 - \$2,500	4
\$2,501 - \$5,000	5
\$5,001 - \$10,000	6
\$10,001 - \$25,000	7
\$25,001 - \$50,000	8
More than \$50,000	9
Don't know / Refused	10

56. (If donated) About how much of that money went to religious or faith-based organizations?

None	1
Less than 25%	2
25% - 49%	3
50% - 74%	4
75% - 99%	5
All of it	6
Don't know / Refused	7

57. (If donated) Would you say that you usually donate to issues and organizations at the local, state, national, or international level? (select all that apply)

Local	1
State	2
National	3
International	4
Don't know / Refused	5

(If donated) Now I'm going to read you a list of reasons people sometimes give for donating money. Please tell me if each reason played a role in your decision to donate money in 2010. [Code: Yes 1, No 2, Don't know/Refused 3]

[Rotate]

58. I volunteered at the organization.
59. I was asked to donate by someone I know.
60. The issue or organization is important to me.
61. I want to help my community.
62. Nonprofit organizations are more effective than government or business.
63. The organization supports my religious or moral beliefs.
64. I feel it is my duty to help.
65. The organization has helped me or someone I know.
66. There are tax benefits or other financial incentives for donating.
67. I was encouraged by my workplace to donate.

(If did NOT donate) Which of the following reasons describe why you did not donate any money to support any issues or organizations in 2010? [Code: Yes 1, No 2, Don't know/Refused 3]

[Rotate]

68. I didn't have money to spare.
69. I didn't trust how the contribution would be used.
70. There's no benefit to me for giving.
71. I'm not interested in any issues.
72. I don't know enough about any issues or organizations.
73. It's not my responsibility.
74. I just didn't think about it.
75. Other than to a spouse or child, did you give any money to a family member or friend who was in need in 2010?

Yes.....	1
No.....	2
Don't know / Refused.....	3
76. (If did NOT donate) To the best you can remember, did you donate any money to support an issue or organization in 2009?

Yes.....	1
No.....	2
Don't know / Refused.....	3
77. Did you volunteer your time and service to any issues or organizations in 2010, including a house of worship? This could include time spent helping out at an event, tutoring, doing administrative work, or anything else.

Yes.....	1
No.....	2
Don't know / Refused.....	3

(If volunteered) Did you volunteer for any of the following issues or organizations in 2010? [Code: Yes 1, No 2, Don't know / Refused 3]

- 78. Arts, culture & humanities
- 79. Education
- 80. Environment
- 81. Workforce development
- 82. Housing & shelter
- 83. Disaster preparedness & relief
- 84. Children & youth
- 85. Human services that provide for people in need
- 86. Civil rights, social action & advocacy
- 87. Community improvement and capacity building
- 88. Religion & spiritual development
- 89. Aging services

- 90. (If volunteered) About how many hours per week did you volunteer to support those issues or organizations, or any others, in 2010?
Enter number (if less than 1, enter 1)

- 91. (If volunteered) As part of your volunteering in 2010, were you lending the organization your professional expertise, such as a contractor building houses for hurricane victims, a lawyer serving on a board of directors, or an artist teaching children how to paint?
Yes.....1
No.....2
Don't know / Refused.....3

- 92. (If offered expertise) About how much of your volunteer time in 2010 was spent lending professional expertise?
Less than 25%.....1
25% - 49%.....2
50% - 74%.....3
75% - 99%.....4
All of it5
Don't know / Refused.....6

(If volunteered) Now I'm going to read you a list of reasons people sometimes give for volunteering. Please tell me if each reason played a role in your decision to volunteer in 2010. [Code: Yes 1, No 2, Don't know / Refused 3]

[Rotate]

- 93. I was asked to volunteer by someone I know.
- 94. I enjoy being around others who support this issue
- 95. The issue or organization is important to me.
- 96. I want to help my community.
- 97. Nonprofit organizations are more effective than government or business.

- 98. The organization supports my religious or moral beliefs.
- 99. I feel it is my duty to help.
- 100. The organization has helped me or someone I know.
- 101. I was encouraged by my workplace to volunteer.

(If did NOT volunteer) Which of the following reasons describe why you did not volunteer your time in 2010? [Code: Yes 1, No 2, Don't know / Refused 3]

[Rotate]

- 102. I didn't have time to spare.
- 103. I didn't feel like I could help.
- 104. I didn't know anyone else doing it.
- 105. I had a bad experience volunteering in the past.
- 106. I'm not interested in any issues.
- 107. I'm not sure how to get involved.
- 108. I just didn't think about it.

109. (If did NOT volunteer) To the best you can remember, did you volunteer at all in 2009?

- Yes.....1
- No.....2
- Don't know / Refused.....3

Public Policy

My next questions are about what can be done to make a difference when it comes to the issues that are important to you and make sure your concerns are addressed by elected and appointed officials. This includes the issues that we have talked about so far.

Thinking about what individuals can do to influence elected officials regarding the issues mentioned previously, how effective do you think each of the following activities are? [Code: Very effective 1, Somewhat effective 2, Not at all effective 3, Don't know / Refused 4]

- 110. Voting
- 111. Volunteering for candidates or political organizations
- 112. Making campaign contributions
- 113. Contacting elected or government officials
- 114. Signing petitions or participating in protests, rallies, or boycotts
- 115. Going to meetings to learn more about an issue or candidate
- 116. Contacting my neighbors, co-workers, friends or others about an issue or candidate
- 117. Posting information about an issue or candidate on social networking websites like Facebook or Twitter
- 118. Educating myself about the issues and candidates
- 119. Participating in organizations that advocate for issues or candidates

120. Did you participate in any of these types of activities aimed at making sure your concerns are addressed by elected and appointed officials in 2010?

- Yes.....1
No.....2
Don't know / Refused.....3

121. (If participated) About how many hours per week did you spend in 2010 participating in these or any other activities aimed at making sure your concerns are addressed by elected and appointed officials or effecting change?

Enter number (if less than 1, enter 1)

(If participated) Now I'm going to read you a list of reasons people sometimes give for participating in political activities. Please tell me if each reason played a role in your decision to participate in 2010. [Code: Yes 1, No 2, Don't know / Refused 3]

[Rotate]

- 122. I was asked to get involved by someone I know.
- 123. I enjoy being around others who agree with me politically.
- 124. I want to help my community.
- 125. Government is more effective than nonprofit organizations or businesses.
- 126. My religious or moral beliefs.
- 127. I feel it is my duty to get involved.
- 128. I feel strongly about a particular issue.

(If did NOT participate) Which of the following reasons describe why you did not participate in political activities in 2010? [Code: Yes 1, No 2, Don't know / Refused 3]

[Rotate]

- 129. I didn't have time to spare.
- 130. I didn't know anyone else doing it.
- 131. I had a bad experience in the past.
- 132. I'm not interested in any issues.
- 133. I just don't know enough about the issue or candidates.
- 134. One person can't make a difference.
- 135. I just don't think government will change.
- 136. I'm not sure how to get involved.
- 137. I just didn't think about it.

138. Where do you normally get your information about your community or the policy issues that are important to you? (Select all that apply)

Local newspaper.....	1
Local newsletter.....	2
Television news.....	3
Radio news.....	4
Periodical or magazine.....	5
The politicians or government officials themselves.....	6
Word of mouth.....	7
Organizations or groups	8
A social networking websites like Facebook or Twitter	9
Some other website.....	10
Someone contacts me by phone, email, or mail.....	11
Don't know / Refused.....	12

139. How often do you vote in national elections, such as races for president and congress?

Every election	1
Most of the elections.....	2
Some elections.....	3
Never.....	4
Don't know / Refused.....	5

140. How often do you vote in statewide elections, such races for governor?

Every election	1
Most of the elections.....	2
Some elections.....	3
Never.....	4
Don't know / Refused.....	5

141. How often do you vote in local elections, such as races for county commission or mayor?

Every election	1
Most of the elections.....	2
Some elections.....	3
Never.....	4
Don't know / Refused.....	5

142. In the past month, have you donated money to a non-profit organization?

Yes.....	1
No.....	2
Don't know / Refused.....	3

143. In the past month, have you volunteered time to an organization?

Yes.....	1
No.....	2
Don't know / Refused.....	3

144. In the past month, have you helped a stranger or someone you didn't know who needed help?

- Yes.....1
No.....2
Don't know / Refused.....3

Demographics

My last few questions are for statistical purposes only.

145. Are you currently registered to vote?

- Yes.....1
No.....2
Don't know / Refused.....3

146. Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or something else?

[IF DEMOCRAT OR REPUBLICAN] Would you call yourself a strong or a not very strong (Democrat/Republican)?

- Strong Democrat.....1
Not very strong Democrat2
Independent.....3
Not very strong Republican4
Strong Republican.....5
No preference (vol)6
Other (vol)7
Don't know/Refused (vol)8

147. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Less than high school.....1
Some high school.....2
High school degree3
Some college4
Associates degree5
Bachelor's degree.....6
Master's degree7
Higher level graduate degree.....8
Don't Know/Refused.....9

148. Which of the following best describes your marital status? Are you...

- Married1
Living with a partner or significant other.....2
Single.....3
Divorced or separated4
Widowed.....5
Don't know/Refused.....6

149. Do you have any children under 18 living in your household?	
Yes	1
No.....	2
Don't know/Refused.....	3
150. Please stop me when I reach the category that best describes your age.	
18-24	1
25-34	2
35-44	3
45-54	4
55-64	5
65 and over.....	6
Don't know/Refused.....	7
151. How do you prefer to describe your main racial or ethnic identity?	
Caucasian.....	1
African American	2
Latino	3
Asian.....	4
Other.....	5
Bi or Multiracial.....	6
Don't know/Refused.....	7
152. How important would you say religion is in your own life?	
Very important	1
Somewhat important	2
Not important at all.....	3
Don't know / Refused.....	4
153. What is your religious practice? Would you say....	
Protestant	1
Non-denominational	2
Catholic.....	3
Jewish	4
Muslim	5
Other.....	6
No religion	7
Don't know / Refused.....	8

154. Please stop me when I reach the category that best describes the total annual income from all members of your household before taxes.

- Less than \$5,0001
- Between \$5,000 and \$15,0002
- Between \$15,000 and \$30,0003
- Between \$30,000 and \$45,0004
- Between \$45,000 and \$60,0005
- Between \$60,000 and \$75,0006
- Between \$75,000 and \$90,0007
- Between \$90,000 and \$100,0008
- Between \$100,000 and \$300,0009
- More than \$300,00010
- Don't know/Refused11

155. Finally, we would like to call some people back at a later date to talk a little more about some of the issues covered in this survey. Would you be willing to speak with us again?

- Yes1
- No Terminate
- Don't know / Refused Terminate

156. (If willing to speak with us again) Thank you very much.

Record name and best phone number to reach them

[Record gender]

Thank and terminate.